Newes

from the Nozth.

Otherwise called the Conference *betvveen Simon Certain, and* Pierce Plowman, faithfully collected and gathered by T. F. Student.

(¥)

Aut bibe aut Abi

*IMPRINTED AT LON-don at the long shop adioyning vn-*to S. Mildreds Church in the Poultrie by Iohn Allde,

1579.

THE PRINTER TO Simon Certain and Pierce Plowman.

C

Go foorth Pierce Plowmã, go foorth Sim Cer-
right woorthy bothe of cõmendation: (tain
Of your degrees I turn you out for twain,
such as I neuer found where I haue gon.

God let you wax to many thousands moe,
that mine eyes may beholde it, and that I:
May then say Lord now let thy Seruant go,
for then shall I be wel content to dye.

TO THE RIGHT HONO-
norable and his ſinguler good Lord Sir Henry Sidney Knight of the moſte Honorable Order of the Garter, Lord Preſident of VVales, & Marches of the ſame.

ALthough there can be no Freendship (right Honorable and my ſinguler good Lord) to ſpeak properly vvhere there is no equalitie betvveen the parties, yet may the ſimpleſt and the meaneſt looue and honor the higheſt and greateſt, yea ſomuch the more as their inequalitie is the greater. But that is not properly called freendship but rather a dutyfull looue & is harder to be expreſſed and shevved for the inequalitie aforeſaid. For Freendship is betvveen equalls, or at the leaſt vvhere the inequalitie is not ſo very great that the Offices and Duties of Freendship vvhich are the bonds and ſinevvs therof can haue no entercourſe. I ſpeak this for my ſelf that haue long deſired occaſion to shevv my hartie goodvvil and affection vnto your Lordship vvhich hath been ſomevvhat hard for mee to doo for the cauſe abooue remembred. And therfore hauing gathered this little conference: I made bold to dedicate it vnto my good Lord. A thing meeter to be my gift then vvoorthy to be preſented vnto your Honor or to go further vnder the name of ſuch a Patron. Hovv be it, my truſt is that your Lordship of your accuſtomed clemency vvil accept a ſimple thing of him at vvhoſe hands nothing at all vvas looked for, and vvill alloovv my goodvvil tovvards the reparation of ſuch faults and Imperfectiõs as are heerin.

So praying God to bleſſe your Lordship and proſper you.

From London the tvventie ſix of Nouember. 1579.

Your Lordships in all humilitie T F.

TO THE GODLY AND Gentle READER.

THou hast heer Godly and gentle Reader the Conferẽce betwẽn Sim Certain and Piere Plovvman two great Clarks as thou maist vnderstand by their Discourse, which I haue gathered & repoꝛted as faithfully and as truely as my simple memoꝛy could retaine the same, and that with some trauail which I accounted my dutie. First vnto them and others by them hẽrin mentioned. And secondly vnto all & euery good man and woman whose mindes and harts God may sturre vp vnto Godlynes and Vertue by their good ensample. Namely all such as are Fathers and Maisters of houlholdes, but chẽfly and pꝛincipally of common Innes and Tauerns whose good oꝛ euil example spꝛeadeth far and wide and I feare in these our dayes rather in coꝛruption of life and maners then in edifying oꝛ increase of Vertue and Godlynes accoꝛding to the saying of Iesus of Sirack that it is as hard foꝛ a Merchant to be no Lyar and foꝛ a Tauerner oꝛ Inholder to be no dꝛunkerd which thing although hẽ hath said to be very hard yet (foꝛ the Inholder) that his rule admitteth exception, thou maist hẽr finde without traueling to Rippon in Yoꝛkshire to learne and so foꝛ a grote oꝛ sixpence thou maist know ỹ which cost mẽ abowe fiue marcks to learne besides my trauail and time spent, which yet if it please thẽ to accept: I shall account right wel bestowed, which God graunt & that in all thy Journeys thy hed ake not befoꝛe thou alight in such an Hostry. Farwel.

& *Aut bibe aut abi.*

THE

¶ The Printer to the READER.

GENTLE READER IF THOV finde any Imperfectiõ in this wooꝛk either foꝛ the matter in ſubſtãce oꝛ els foꝛ the diuiſion, the maner and foꝛme therof I truſt ÿ wilt allow a reaſonable excuſe alwel vnto the *Author* as vnto mee, bewen whõe thy blame is otherwiſe to be deuided. Thou knowest ÿ to wꝛite & repoꝛte a thing at the mouth of the Speaker aſketh a nimble hand and a great memoꝛy, if a man had his Tooles ready foꝛ the purpoſe which yet this *Author* had not redy foꝛ nothing ſo like as any ſuch matter, and therefoꝛe was foꝛced to put his braſſ pan in truſt with all and to wꝛite it in his way homeward.

In dooing wherof his care was greter to couch the matter truely in ſubſtance then to parte oꝛ to deuide oꝛ otherwiſe to digeſt the ſame. Which hee referred vnto mee, & which alſo I haue doon as the ſhoꝛtnes of the time gaue me leaue.

Bothe which excuſes, if it pleaſe thee to admit, thou maiſt in time to come receiue it in moꝛe perfection, alwel foꝛ his parte beeing the matter in ſubſtance wherof I dout not much hath eſcaped him, and alſo foꝛ the diuiſion beeing mine.

Farwel.

VVM. in commendation of this Treatise.

LEauing at large the Brunts of brinish flood,
The pitched Feelds and fables finely pend:
This Author héer to doo his Cuntrie good,
On woork of woorth his time and toile dooth spēd.

The busie Brain with cankred Enuie fraught,
That sues and striues for sturring of a straw:
May read héerin his lesson largely taught,
And by the same descrie him self a Daw.

The Counsailor, the Spokesman, and the rest,
Who simple soules to néedlesse lawing eg:
May learn héerby such dealings to detest,
As driue poore men their bread with teares to beg.

The prating Sot whose peremptory spéech,
Is brayed foorth all Lawyers to defame:
Not far from hence may finde a cunning Léech,
To charme his tung and shroud it in with shame.

But in few woord smy meaning to impart,
Yf you demaund what mine opinion is:
Hée hath doon wel, Gods blessing on his hart,
Who send mée [illegible] Books so good as this.

Cœlum, non Solum. VV. M.

Antony

Antony Munday to all curteous and freendly Readers in commendation of this VVoork.

(‡)

AS Tully did of vertuous life define,
And Ouid paint the od conceits of loone:
And Maro squared in a direct line,
The hard assaults that valiant harts did proone,
In bloody Battels for their fames behoone.
As fliering Fortune should them chaunce to pay:
In vaunting verse as Maro tels the vvay.

But leauing novv at large such fond delights,
Such Fables fond as pratling Poets vse:
This Author heer presenteth to your sights,
Such tales of trueth as may you force to muse.
To iudge aright the crime of eche abuse,
As heer tvvixt Sim and Pierce he dooth compound:
Such vvise conceits as seldome hath been found.

VVhen you haue red, I udge then the Authors paines,
His tedious toyle in vviſſhing vvel to thee:
Thy Freendly thanks, he craues no other gaines,
VVhich vnto him more vvelcome sure shall bee,
Then riches store if thou couldst giue it free.
VVherfore my Freends doo this at my request:
To heare and see and alvvay say the best.

Honos alit Artes. A M.

Thomas

❧ Thomas Procter in reporte of the Authors good vvil

AMong the woorthy woorkes,
Which learned *Tully* pend:
The care of Cuntrie and of Freends.
hee greatly dooth commend.
¶ Which lesson in my minde,
the Man which took in hand:
To pen this pleasant History,
did perfect vnderstand.
¶ For in the same hee shoves,
a looue vnto his Frends:
Beside a zealous minde of good,
that to his Cuntrie tends.
¶ Of *Louers* liues, of *vvarres*,
ne yet of *vvunders* great:
Hee seemes to publish vnto vs,
but simply dooth intreat.
¶ Of Iilly Wyen, whose prook,
dooth such experience giue:
As for Examples of our liues,
learnes eche estate to liue.
¶ Wherin the *Author* sought,
such meanes to publish it:
As in my simple Iudgement sure,
might seem to prooue his wit.
¶ But for the careful paines,
which he hath spent heerin:
Hee only craues for recompence,
your fauours good to win.
¶ Wherby you may him mooue,
to vtter his good wil:
When as occasion shall him serue,
in woorkes of greater skil.

Nil melius Arte; T P.

¶ *Iohn Peeterhouse to the Reporter of this Hiſtory.*

THou that haſt repoꝛted this pleaſant Hiſtoꝛy,
Wherof thine eyes and eares are a witneſſe:
And haſt intreaſured the memoꝛy,
Of Pierce and Simon foꝛ their woꝛthines.
Withouten hope of hire oꝛ recompence:
Foꝛ thy long iourney, oꝛ foꝛ thy diſpence.
¶ Thou haſt acquit thy dutie vnto them,
In this behalf, and if I geſſe aright:
Thou haſt deſerued well of other men,
Befoꝛe whom thou haſt ſet a Candle light.
Of Nurture and of Education:
By men of baſe and meane condition.
¶ Which ſome foꝛ that cauſe wil eſtéeme the leſſe,
Hauing reſpect vnto the circumſtaunce:
The great apparaunce of vnlikelyneſſe,
Waying all others in their owne ballaunce.
As if that God could not reſerue a few:
Such as him liſt his gloꝛy foꝛ to ſhew.
¶ Foꝛ what though this age vniuerſally,
Séemeth giuen ouer to coꝛruption:
Séemed it not ſo in the dayes of Elie,
When yet God had reſerued many a one?
So hath he now, that are not gon aſide:
Noꝛ ſolde them ſelues to Couetiſe and Pꝛide.
¶ As thou haſt well ſhewed in this Hiſtoꝛy,
What by thine owne pꝛoꝛe and experience:
What by thine Holie Simons authoꝛitie,
Which (foꝛ mine owne part) I doꝛ reuerence.
And therfoꝛe (I ſay) thank come to thy hand:
That haſt it giuen vs to vnderſtand.
¶ And puttſt vs in hope that Charitie,
Is not ſtark dead, though ſhe be wounded ſoꝛe:
By Pꝛide and Couetiſe her enemye,
And that our God yet kéepeth ſome in ſtoꝛe.
That bothe in déed and woꝛd doꝛ ſéeke his pꝛaiſe:
God let them wax and giue them happy dayes. FINIS.

¶ The Reporter to his Book.

(*⁂*)

My little Book where so thou chaunce to dwel,
God giue thee fauour in thy Readers sight:
Whom if thou please all, thou must quit thee well.
And better then I feare is in thy might.
For that dooth seldome chaunce to any one:
Better or wurse without exception.

¶ If any man or Woman chalenge thee/
For any Woord or any argument:
Come not to seek thy defence at me/
For I am not thine Author verament.
Get thee into the North to *Rippon* Town:
And there enquire for *Pierce* ỹ woorthy Clown.

¶ And eke for *Simon Certaine* at the Signe,
Of the Greek *Omega*, there dooth he dwell:
where welcome thou shalt be as I diuine/
Aske them whether thou haue reported well.
Their Conference accoording to the trueth:
If they say yea, of others haue no rueth.

FINIS.

HOVV

How the Author comming homevvard out of Scotland through Yorkshire, chaunced to lodge in Rippon. At vvhat signe, the name of the Hoste, the order and maner of the House and Familye. And his entertaynment there. Chap. 1.

IN my last return from Edenbrough in Scotland, comming homeward through Yorkshire: I traueled somewhat out of the common high London way of purpose to see the Countrie. And one day among others, toward euen: I chaunced to come to a little through fare Town called Rippon, where at the very entring into the town I met a poore olde Woman, of whom I asked if there were any good lodging in the town. She answered me, that there was good lodging at the Signe of ỳ Gréek Omega. The Gréek Omega (quoth I) What do you mean by that? Nothing said she, but that there is good lodging and honest entertainment which (I suppose) is all that you require. Then I asked her what was the Good mans name of the house. His name (quoth she) is Simon Certain, we call him commonly Sim Certain. Sim Certain (quoth I) surely these are very straunge names, and so bidding her farewell: I departed into the town ward, much more desirous to be come to my lodging, for the straungenes of the names, aswel of the Signe: as also of the Good man of the House. By that time I had entred a little way into the town: I was ware of a very faire Græk Omega, hanging forth as a common Signe, euen as the olde Woman had tolde me before. And thither I went, and entring into the house: I found in the Hall the Good man, his two Sonnes, his Chamberlain, and his Hostler singing the Thirty. Psalme of Dauid very distinctly and orderly. The Goodwife with her two Daughters sat spinning at their Wheeles a little distaunce from them. All which things when I beheld: I thought with my self that these things were yet more straunge to beholde, then were

either the Signe or els the Gods mans name to beare. So I bad them God spæd. The Hoste very courteously arose, and bad me welcome, so did the Wife also, and asked me whether I meant to tary all night. I answered yea. Then he asked me if I would see my Chamber. No gentle Hoste (quoth I) I will not hinder so much your good exercise, for I am sure I cannot be lodged amisse in this house. Not so Sir (quoth he) but ye shall haue the best that we haue and welcome. I gaue him hartye thanks. Then he enquired of me, of whence I was, where I had bëene, and whither I was bound. I tolde him I was a Southern man borne and dwelling, and that I had bëene at Edenborough in Scotland, and was thus farre in my way homeward. In good time Sir (quoth he) and yée are hartily welcome into this part of Yorkshire. I thank you gentle Hoste (quoth I.

The comming thither of Pierce Plowman, beeing newly come from London. His request to the Hoste to lend him fiue pound vppon a pawn. The refusall of the Hoste, the question thereupon mooued, beeing the matter of the Conference. Chap. 2.

By that time we had talked scant half an houre: there came in a Countrie man a Neighbour, a tolly olde fatherly man, bringing vnder his arme a fardel of Bookes, as many as he might well holde vndernethe one of his armes, he gaue vs the time of the day. What Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) welcome from Londō. Sir (quoth he to me) this Neighbour of mine is lately come from where you are going God willing. Truely (quoth I) and this is happily met by grace of God, and as I verily suppose nëere in the mid way betwëene Edenbrough and London. With that Neighbour Simon quoth this Pierce plowman (for that was his name) I am come to desire your help. What is the matter Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste?)

Neighbour

Neighbour (quoth he) to lend me fiue pound for half a yéer, for truely (quoth he) I haue spent all my mony at London, and haue not left my self so much as to buy my séed Wheat, wherwith to sowe my land this season. No haue neighbour Pierce? (quoth he) that was very il handled, ye should alwayes so vse your matters that the main stock be saued whole. Fye neighbour Simon quoth he, speak no more of that for ỹ reuerence of God, for truely I am ashamed of my self, but what remedie now saue patience, and to learne to be wiser hérafter. What meanes all these paper Bookes (quoth our Hoste. Mary neighbour quoth Pierce they shalbe suretie vnto you for the repaiment of your fiue pound. With that they were vnbound, and béing opened & loked vpon: they were Billes, Answers, Replications, Reioinders Copies of Depositions, and such like. Some out of one Court, some out of another. When our Hoste had séene them all: why Neighbour (quoth he) do you think to mét with any mã that is so mad to lend v. pence vpon such trash? Trash neighbour quoth Pierce: they stand me in aboue fiftie pound. Peraduenture so quoth our Hoste, but that proueth not that they are worth fiftie points, sauing vnto him that were as mad to buy them of you: as you bought them at their hands that solde them vnto you. But or you mét with any such chapmã: I beléeue you will be weary of kéeping them. With that Pierce began to be half offended. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, fiue pound is a small matter betwéene vs twaine, you shall haue it vpon your word. But as for your Bookes: hére dwelleth a Lady not far hence, cary them to her, for they are far fet and déere bought, and such things (men say) are good for Ladyes.

Pierce findeth it straunge that men should pay so deere for thinges, vvhich in their handes are so vile and little vvoorth, as concerning their return.

Chap. 3.

Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) I can put vp that mock at your hands, for I knowe ye meane me no euill but good therby, but verily me thinketh it standeth hardly with their estimation that will be holden and termed worshipfull yea honorable, to take so extremely for things, wherof no better return is to be made, yet must we pay them with great attendaunce, with cap in hand and all reuerence. Great reason quoth our Hoste, for they are worshipfull, and right worthye of all those duties. Then haue I bene in an errour a long time (quoth Pierce) for I haue alwayes hitherto thought that worship and honor had stood in giuing: & not in taking, in helping, releeuing and doing good: and not in their contraryes, and this seemeth vnto me bothe reasonable and also common experience, for we honor God at whose hands we receiue all goodnes, and therfore properly vnto him is all honor and worship due, and vnto men but so far forth as they approchen vnto God in qualitie of vertue, iustice, mercy and other goodnes, wherfore in all reason he ought to be moste honorable and worshipfull that doth the moste good, and vnto the greatest number, for surely in my discretion, the worship and the gaine ought to be deuided, and he that gayneth, or is releeued, and is holpen: ought to honor and worship him by whom he gayneth, is holpen and releeued, for otherwise why doth the Seruant worship his Maister & not e conuerso. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, our honorable & reuerend forefathers with great wisdome and discretion assessed these fees and charges, and that for the great zeale and loue which they bare vnto Godlines and vertue, and to the persons qualified therwith.

With that Pierce clapped his hand vpon ỹ bord. I make God a vow (quoth he) what so euer he was that first praised a sheet of paper with twelue lines written therin at eight pence, nay at xy. pence, for I am sure I haue CC. that cost me after that rate, he was neither frend to godlines ne vertue, to God neither to good man or woman. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, this is but the errour of your iudgement,

and

and that shall appéere vnto you so euidently, that your self shall confesse that these fées and charges which you think so great and so excessiue had so great reason in their beginning: as that greater had neuer any ciuil ordinance or cõstitution. Whether yée wil regarde the honor and glory of God or the preseruation of the common Welth which chéefly dependeth therupon. That séemeth wunderful straunge vnto mée (quoth Pierce) that in such extreame taking and so small rendring there should lye hidden so great mistery of good meaning and therfore gladly would I heare your reasons therupon. Very wel Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) then I will take in hand to prowe it vnto you, which I trust I shall dw sufficiently: if I can prowe these are no proper nor priuate gain or profit, but a publique and a common treasure to the ease and relief of the whole common Welth and of the best & godlyest Members of the same, yea verily (quoth Pierce) very wel (quoth our Hoast.)

Simon approoueth their great Fees and Charges as things ment, to be a reward and nurishment of Knowledge, Learning and Vertue, and punishment of vngodlines and vice, and therfore true and iust. *Cap. 4.*

FIrst I think yée wil graunt (quoth hée) that Magistrates and Officers are the Deputies and Leiutenaunts of G O D hér in Earth, high and honorable, for that they are in very déed the hand and mouth of the Law, and in fewe & plaine words the speaking & working Law, for by them the law commaundeth and forbiddeth. So that their end and purpose is that God may be honored and glorified, good and godly People cherished, shortly that peace and concord may be maintained. I graunt you all this (quoth Pierce) you will graunt (quoth hée) that the way and mean to work all these things is to punish and chastice the wicked and the vngodly, and to giue as little fauour vnto sinne as is possible, that is very true also (quoth Pierce.) Yée will graunt quoth our Hoast that the wayes and meanes to

punish

punish sinnes & wickednes are diuers, according to the qualitie of the offence, as some by death, some by other punnishment of the body greater or smaller. And that there is also a pecuniall punishment by the purse, as by fine and ransome, and such like. I graunt you all this quoth Pierce. You will graunt me also (quoth he) that all punishments are grieuous vnto the sufferers therof, neither are or ought to be pleasant vnto the doers and executors. That is very true also quoth Pierce, except they be wicked persons bothe the sufferer and the executor. Then quoth our Hoste, seeing all punishments are fearfull and grieuous vnto the sufferer therof, & no pleasure, but rather sorowe and griefe of hart vnto the executors therof: such and so must needs be the first causes and occasiõs therof. That is very true quoth Pierce. You knowe quoth our Hoste, that the causes and occasiõs of punishment is sin, wickednes and misgouernment of life, for the word of God telleth vs, that the reward of sinne is death. All that is very true quoth Pierce. Very well then quoth our Hoste, these Propositions which you haue graunted: do suffise for the matter which I haue taken in hand to proue, which is, that these great Fées and charges were neuer ment, nor yet are receiued or conuerted into priuate or proper vse. I pray you Neighbour quoth Pierce, let me heare how it is proued, for I promise you faithfully for any thing I haue yet herd: your proues are farther to fet.

You knowe quoth our Hoste, that the nature of the vngodly is to be quarelous and contencious, and dayly prouoking one an other, and also to take no wrong & do no right. That is very true quoth Pierce. You knowe quoth our Host that the common weapõ wherwith they wil be auẽged vpon eche other is the Law, which indeed is the Magistrate, as ye haue already graunted, so that vpon the matter: he is made the executor of their wilfulnes and vengeaunce, which they will needs do vpon eche other, which thing you haue alredy confessed to be grieuous and vnpleasant to euery good man. Therfore hath it euer bẽn, and yet is thought, and that very wisely and truely, that the likeliest way & meane to dissuade

their

their wilfulnes which no reason, loue nor feare of GOD could diſſwade was to make their wilfulnes as déere and as heauy vnto them as reaſonably might be don, to the end that they ſhould not ſo lightly and for euery trifle ver and trouble bothe the Magiſtrate & one an other, which effect although it failed to worke, & that their madnes would not be reſtrayned therby: that yet their vngodlines might return to the profit and releéfe of others their Neighbours & Brethern that were better affected, & ſo by one ſelf and ſame meane: the vngodly puniſhed & fléeced, and the godly amended & inriched therby, & that this was their meaning ỹ was the firſt aſſeſſors therof: common experience teacheth vs, for in néedfull and neceſſary actions, as debt, detinew, and account and ſuch like: the charges are ſo reaſonable, as that no man would in conſcience giue leſſe.

The reaſon is, for that they are actions of common right, and ſuch as muſt néeds day by day ariſe betwéene a man and his Brother, neither do they diſhoneſt either of the parties, which I dare not affirm vpon actions vpon caſes, neither did they ſo iudge of them, as I verily beléeue, and therfore did they ſet double and treble charges thereupon, for greater is the charges in a brabble for a word ſpoken: then for thrée hundred pound of honeſt det.

So that the Magiſtrate, who for ſuch Ale houſe actions and brabbles: ſhould otherwiſe neuer be at reſt, except he ſhould deny them his help, which might be ſlaunderous and perillous to the whole eſtate.

The Magiſtrate I ſay of pure pittie and compaſſion was forced to ſet great charges vpon them, for the ſmall fauour that he bare vnto them, & vnto their firſt cauſes & occaſions.

The greatnes of all which charges not withſtanding, yet do we dayly ſée how the vngodly run togither by heaps like brute beaſts, and yet I dare ſafely ſay, that by the greatnes of theſe charges, and the terrour therof: many a brabling matter hath béene and is dayly put vp without any reuenge ſought therof, and many a one having purſued and recouered in his action, yet haue his charges ſo galled him: that

he hath bene easier to deale with all his life after. And so by this meane many a wilfull body brought to knowe him self, and to honor God therby.

I cannot tell Neighbour Simon quoth Pierce, but I my self haue had two or three brabbles that haue kept me doing these seuen yeres, in which time I am sure I haue spent aboue fiftie pound, beside my charges to and fro, losse of time, and my hinderaunce at home. And what haue ye gotten for all this? quoth our Hoste. These papers quoth he. Wel worth fiftie points quoth our Hoste. I think verily quoth our Hoste if any honest Neighbour had neded to haue borowed ten Pound therof: you would not haue it so ready to haue pleasured him withall. If I should say truely (quoth Pierce) I think the very same. What are you assessed vnto the poore in your parish quoth our Hoste? A peny a week quoth Pierce. And think you that enough quoth our Hoste? Yea verily quoth Pierce. Loe Sir quoth our Hoste, whether commeth this vnto my saying and maintenaunce of these great Fees and charges or not? Who can deny the excellency of this institution? wherby the Couetous and vngodly men are shot one against an other, and do punish eche other, and wherby also so plentiful prouision is made for the godly poore at their charges, and yet no thank to them therfore, and that those things from the which they would depart vnto any Honest or godly vse or purpose, with as good will as from their eyes to be plucked out of their heads, or their tripes out of their bellyes, by this meane vndesired of their owne accord, they bring it in by handfuls, & so as it hath bene sayd, plentiful prouision made for their godly Neighbours at their charges and yet no thank vnto them therfore.

Call you this a prouiding for the poore? Neighbour (quoth Pierce) I would I had giuen you the best horse in my Plough to make this saying true, and I swere to you (quoth he) proue it true: and you shall haue him yet or this day Seuen night, for that would ease my hart if I might perceiue that any godly person hath fared the better or were amended by any parte of all my great expences. For then yet should I think

think that I haue done some good with all the losse of my money. Why Neighbour Pierce (quoth Simon) do you doubt that all these sommes or the greatest part therof: commeth not to the vse of the common welth, and to the releese and sustenaunce of the godly powre, and other easements of common things in maintenaunce of the common Welth? Nay Neighbour Simon (quoth he) I dout it not, for I am fully perswaded the contrary. Truely Neighbour Pierce (quoth he) this is an vncharitable and a very erronious oppinion, and that I will prowe vnto you by reasons manifest and apparant, & such as your self haue alredy graunted & confessed. I pray you neighbour Simō (quoth Pierce) let me heare how.

Simon approoueth these fees and charges as publique and not priuate, by argument taken from effects vnto their causes.

Chap. 5.

Whosoeuer he be that Coueteth priuately to gaine and profit by any thing (quoth our Hoste) coueteth the thing wherby he gayneth and profiteth, this is so true (quoth he) that I will not desire you to graunt it vnto me, for it is a necessary argument from the effect vnto the cause, and therfore if ye will affirm that the Magistrate and officer coueteth these great fees and charges and priuately to thriue and war rich therby: you must necessarily conclude, that he fauoureth all the first & mean causes therof, which were a horrible & a fearfull conclusion; & yet as I haue said followeth necessarily vpon ỹ premisses granted, & therfore is couetise so much more odious & detestable in a Magistrate then in a common person, for couetise as he excedeth all other vices simply considered: euen so respectiuely he excedeth him self, I say respectiuely to wit, qualified by the person in whom he dwelleth, for in a priuat person: he is but a priuat sin, & extēdeth vnto his M. only, but in a Magistrate he is a publique & gēerall corruptiō of all ỹ people, for ther is no coueto⁹ person bēing but a priuat man or womā ỹ wisheth any other to be such as they thē selues are, the reason is; for that the Couetise of others: is nothing whereby they

should gayne or be aduaunced, but rather lose therby. Therfore could they be content that there were few or no others such as they are, wherby it appeereth that couetise in a priuate Person neither worketh nor wisheth any general corruption and yet fulfilleth the talent and habit of his subiect and so much the more. The very same is to be said of all other vices in all other persons without exception of degree, as Whordome, Pride, Gluttony, Drunkennes and all other excesse in voluptuous plesure, in all which things what soeuer hath or euer had the greatest felicitie and enioyd most therof yet would they not that others did the like, or at the least no moe then they them selues must necessarily vse for for tha'ccomplishment of their pleasures which requireth some company. The reason is already shewed to wit for y other Folkes pleasures are not their pleasures, neither do increase the same, but rather their paines and misery.

For the hunger, scarcitie and want of others giueth a good taste and sauour vnto the voluptuousnes and pleasures of y vngodly, and therfore could they be very wel content to enioy their owne wickednes thē selues, for pleasure haue they none nor gain in the lewdnes or the misgouernaūce of other. And if they had: yet want they power to corrupt others therby otherwise then by example which can not do much in any one priuate man or woman, for that they haue but the leading of their owne liues. But of Couetise in the Magistrat it is otherwise, for hē hath the leading and the fourming of other mens liues and therfore differeth from the cōmon and priuat person bothe concerning his wil and also concerning his habititie and power to execute the same.

¶ First concerning desire and will hē cannot wish that the common people should be godly and vertuous, for neither standeth his great gain, nor his Ambition therin, for why they are two things incompatible and contrary.

When concerning his power to execute his wil and desire: it is so great and so mightie that the olde Prouers hath not douted to call the common People the Image of their Magistrates and officers for as certainly as this antecedent. The man eateth and drinketh inferreth this consequent

the

the man is a liue: euen so certainly this proposition the Magistrates & officers are couetous inferreth this cõclusion.

The People are vngratious and vngodly. The reason is peremptory for the Magistrate and Officer hath the Bridle rain in his hand either to giue libertie vnto vngodlynes and dissolution of life: orels to refrain the same.

Now all men may dayly see by proof that there is no wilde Beast so very brute and barbarous as man will war and bee through libertie and that for the excellencie of his nature bone all other Creatures and his great vnderstanding in good and euil.

¶ And therfore to admit in a Magistrate a couetise and a desire of priuate and proper gain, Namely by fees and charges arysing and growing as is alredy confessed: these were to conclude an odious and detestable Consequence against ỹ Magistrate and Officer of whome wee are forbidden by God to speak or think saue all honor and reuerence.

¶ Wherfore I say it standeth not with the reuerend and honourable opinion that wee are bound to haue of the Magistrate to say or to think that these great gains and fees do return to him in priuate and proper vse, but rather to Iudge & think that the Magistrate & Officer receiueth them as thing excommunicat and as a common Treasure dedicated vnto godly vses and purposes in ease and releef of the whole common welth.

¶ Would God this were true quoth Pierce, for I dare lay my life (quoth hee) that if all the sums of money that are leud ly and shamefully spent in one Terme about vain sutes and brabbles were reserued and accounted in the end of ỹ Term: they would amount to more then all the Collection for the Poore through out all the parishes in England for half a yer, neuertheless many a one thinketh him self sore charged, namely my self God forgiue mee.

Truely Neighbour (quoth our Hoast) I am of no other Opinion, neither do I Iudge that all these great Fees and Reuenues are any other thing but a Collection for the purposes and intents aforesaid, neither that the Receiuers of ỹ

same do differ from those other Collectors in Parish Church saving in the greatnes of their receit and also saving that they are not forced to craue it at the parties hands and some time to conuent him before a Iusticer of peace for a grote or six pence as the others oft times are. And also saving that for their reuerend and honorable estemation they are not accoũtable. Saving vnto the Lord God the Author generall and vnto their owne Consciences.

☞ *Pierce denyeth the reasons alleaged as probable but not necessary, his reasons therfore.*

Cap. 6.

NEighbour Simon quoth Pierce you haue alleaged many fair and coulorable propositiõs and conclusions and haue gon about mée wt this reason and with that.

I am no Schole man, Neighbour quoth hée, but yet some reason I haue and some experience I haue séen, and some héed I haue taken thereof, wherfore if you wil giue mée leaue to answere you: you shal hear mée as probably disprowe these your allegations as you prowed them, for I shall prowe all your propositions are probable and not necessary, neither do inferre a necessary conclusion as you haue pretended. For the better doing wherof: first for orders sake, I wil reherce your propositions, reasons and arguments, wherof the first is: that the Magistrate and Officer is to be had in all honor and reuerence because hée is the Law which is moste honorable and reuerend, this I confesse as an vndouted trueth, namely for that the end aswel of the one as of the other, is that God may be honored and glorified, godly People cherished. and maintain peace and concord strengthned and furthered, wherupon standeth the prosperitie & the good estate of all Cuntries and common welths, their wayes and meanes you haue alleaged are these.

To punish and chastice the wicked and the vngodly, and to restrain their libertie as much as is possible. Yée haue further alleaged that punishments are diuers, some corporall, some

some pecuniall, and that that all punishments are grieuous bothe vnto the sufferers, and also vnto the doers therof, but that I will not graunt ye without distinction.

Very true it is that all punishments without exception, are grieuous vnto the sufferers therof, but vnto the executor therof: they are not all so, namely such as are pecuniall and the gaine therof returning vnto the executor. For although that to beat, burn, hang or whip any creature of God, namely a Christian man or woman: is an odious thing, & wherin no good or Godly hart can haue pleasure: yet for aduauntage sake it is often otherwise, for otherwise there would not so many Oxen, Shéep and Calues be murthered, and so few Hogs, Dogs or Cats, their offences béeing only their good flesh.

Wherfore, although that in all Godly reason your arguments haue great necessitie: yet in humaine reason and experience it hath but bare probabilitie and is no more. But as if for example you wil say Women ought to be ashamed to be séene bibbing Wine in common Tauerns, or to be séen at common lasciuious and bawdie Stage Playes: therfore they are ashamed therof.

This is an argument gathered from posse to esse, to wit, from should or ought to be, to is simply, and hath not any necessitie nor firmitie, and that shall you sée if you will goe with me to London this next terme.

How be it, you séeme to inforce your antecedent, by the honorable existimation wherin I am bound to haue the Magistrate and Officer, and therby you think that of dutie I ought to graunt it you for the shamefull consequence which necessarily ensueth vpon the denyall therof.

Truely that not withstanding, me thinketh all this but a very bare and naked proofe.

Simon

Simon maintaineth his assertion by authoritie of holy Scripture and diuersitie taken betvveen the revvarde of Vertue, Learning and Knovvledge and the hire of seruile trauail and labour.

Cap. 7.

CAll you this a bare and naked prꝛof Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoast if you, denye this prꝛof (quoth hée) you reuerse & ouerthꝛow all humain societie which is maintained and vpholdē by giuing vnto God ẏ which is due vnto God, and vnto man ẏ which is due vnto Man. But vnto God what can wée giue saue honꝛ, prayse & glorẏ, first and immediatly vnto him self, and secondly vnto his Deputies and Lieutenaunts, to wit, Magistrates & Officers whose calling and appointing therunto as it is of God: so must and ought wée to think that it is foꝛ their godlynes and vertues, foꝛ God him self hath said them that honꝛ mée I will honꝛ, and they that dishonour mée I will dishonour, wherfoꝛe our wise and reuerend Elders and Foꝛefathers in their assessing these great Fées and charges: did mean to honꝛ them whome God honoured. And therfoꝛe vnto their callings appoīted they great and honꝛable reuenues, knowing that their gain is the punishment of vice and the rewarde of Uertue, and that the part & poꝛtion of all the godly is therin, knowing also that there is not so great Incouragement vnto Uertue and Godlynes: as the liberall rewarde therof, and that all vngodlynes and vnthankfulnes is measured by the greatnes of the gꝛdnes and benefit receiued either at ẏ handꝛ of God oꝛ man. Lastly knowing ẏ they might not prꝛsecute but persecute the causes & occasiōs of these gains as hath alrẽdy bẽn prꝛued, and therfoꝛe I say abꝛue all common reason and discretion they assessed these Fées and reuenues that the gains might be great and yet the causes therof few, quite contrary to all other estates and faculties, foꝛ what other reason is there that one man shall labour soꝛe a whole day & at night shall receiue twelue pence oꝛ eight pẽce foꝛ his hire: An other foꝛ half oꝛ a quarter of an houres easie trauail shall

receiue

receiue xx. shillings or sometime more, what is the cause of this diuersitie? euen this, the one is a hire and a price of a seruile labour and trauell, and is receiued in proper and priuat vse, the other is an honor done vnto vertue, Godlinesse and knowledge: which do receiue nor holde, or account any so base things proper or priuat, or can be so basely minded, as to ioy therin, further then they may glorify God therby.

What other reason is there, that one man in the return of a Reame of paper, shall gaine xij. pence or xvi. pence cleer, and yet where he layd out v. pence: the other layd out x. shillings. And after the same rate in Wax, that one man shall sell more for vi. pence: then an other shall sell for vij. pound, which neuertheleſſe bought as deere as he, within xij. pence at xx. shillings waring, and bothe layd out more mony, & longer loked for the return therof. I say theris no reason other then is already made.

Pierce denyeth the calling to office, to be such as Simon hath alledged. Chap. 8.

NEighour Simon (quoth Pierce) wheras you maintaine your assertion by the worthines of the Magistrate and Officer, and do insist therupon, alledging that they are called by God, and that for their godlines and vertue. The first part I greatly dout, for that many of them buy their offices, and pay very deerely therfore, yea some sell their very inheritaunces for that purpose, I mean to buy offices, now did I neuer read that euer God receiued Money for an office, how be it I refer my self herein to my Maisters that are learned.

The nert part that they are called for their Vertue and Godlines, surely then I verily suppose some of them are called for the things that neuer were in them before, and then were the caller deceiued, which God cannot be, except you will say that God of his meere goodnes and mercy called them

for the vertues and godlines which he meaneth to call them vnto, and in this order beginneth to worke, I meane in bestowing vpon them so liberally, & by that meanes to charge them with his expectation, in respect of their great Talent committed vnto them, which thing you seeme to alledge, as no small cause and consideration of the high assessing of the fees and charges aforesayd, and that so great mercies & graces bestowed vpon them by God, and so liberall reward appointed vnto them by men: should suffise to make them godly and verteous from thence forth: what so euer they were or had béene before. All which arguments, although they be godly and probable: yet as I sayd before they stand doutful, for the olde Prouerb, Honors chaunge maners. I beléeue the godly and the learned do dout whether it be taken in the better part, or in the worse, for I am very sure, that many are worse disposed, and much more vngodly in high and honorable calling: then while they were in meane estate and degrée. Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) there is no rule so generall, that it admitteth not exception, albeit I dout not nor euer did, that honors chaunge maners, is and euer was meant in the better part. For the wise man saith. He that is vngodly in welth: how much more vngodly would he be in pouertie? The examples are many that do proue that honors chaunge men to the better, namely of Saule, of whom it is said that béeing called from a simple boy after his Inauguration: he felt him self sudenly chaunged, and as the book saith: he felt a new hart in him.

The like examples we haue of many Kings & Prophets in the holy Scripture. But to come nérer, both for the time and also the place, in our English History we read of that noble King H. the fifth, who in his Fathers life was of euill gouernment, and kept company with riotors and vnthrifts, so that there was small hope of him, but after the death of H. the fourth. when this yung man was placed in his kingdom: he sent for all his olde companions, who were not a little glad therof, but when they weare come into his presence: he sharply rebuked them, and giuing them small rewards, yet

better

better then he thought them worthy, he forbad them during their liues to come within xy. miles of the Court, and that vpon great penaltie. All these examples do manifestly proue, that liberall reward of vertue, and high and Honorable calling do increase vertue in them in whom it is alredy, and causeth them in whom it is not saue only in apparaunce, yet for pure shame to imbrace it, seeing that otherwise hot coales are heaped vppon their heads, through their shameleſſe vnthankfulnes vnto them that haue so thorowly prouoked thē with the greatnes of their benefits.

And therfore against all these reasons and proofs, to say that the Magistrate and Officer should priuatly Couet and conuert so great summes of treasure: it were to shamefull and slaunderous, considered that they are the effects of so euill causes as hath already béene shewed. And considered also the horrible and wicked conclusion that would ensue therupon, as also hath already béne proued.

Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) neuer tell me what might or doth insue therupon: but consider the trueth and the matter as it is in déed. And if these great fées and charges do not come vnto their receiuers and takers in proper and priuate: what meane they to make so great labour, suite, frendship and cost to get those offices and callings. And how commeth it to passe that by the meanes of such offices: such as before were of small habilitie, come to purchase a Barons liuing, yea twaine or thrée. Shortly, that their care is greater to heare and learne where any Land or Lordship is to be solde: then for the Money wherewith to purchase the same.

Simon confirmeth his assertion touching the desire to beare office to be good, by the Etimologie and exposition of the vvoord Officium.

Chap. 9.

NEighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) all these matters are easily deuided, vnto the which thus I answere. To the first which is their great desire to be in such Offices of receit, I say you misiudge of their desire because you do not vnderstãd the meaning of this word Office and do think him to be an English man wheras in very deed his Father is an Italian, whose proper signification and meaning you do not vnderstand, for in our English tung Office is no more to say nor nothing els but Seruice, so that whosoeuer desireth an Office hée desireth to do seruice orels a place wherin to do seruice, now all men knowe that a priuate man is not able to compare with the Magistrate or Officer in abilitie and power. Therfore to desire an Office is to desire to be better abled, to expresse and declare the hartie goodwil and affection which hée hath to bée seruiceable vnto God and his commonwelth, for that in priuat estate his power answereth not vnto his goodwil therin, and therfore the better man the more desirous to be in Office and in the more Offices, for the greater is his power to shew his good affection towards God who is the Giuer of all these things.

¶ Neighbour Simon quoth Pierce I cannot tel what Cuntrie mans Office is, neither do I greatly force whether his Father be an Italian, Spaniard or Frenchman, but if he be the same in Latin that seruice is in English: I am sure that both in Latin, French, Spanish and English hée stinketh when he is to freely offered, and that (I am very sure) did Aesop mean in his Fable of the Sowe great with pig vnto whome (saith hée) there came a Fox who alleadging vnto her his great skil in the art of a Midwife proffered her his seruice toward her deliuerance, vnto whome shée answered, that the greatest and best seruice that hée could do vnto her, was to kéep him far inough from her, which shée also prayed him to do, wher by you may gather what the Authors opinion was vpõ this voluntary offer of seruice and yet hée doth not alleage that the Fox offered any money, I suppose because hée had no money to offer. But Simõ Magus offered money in ẏ Acts of ẏ

Apostles

Apostles, and what the holy Ghost thought therof: you may there vnderstand. Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoast this is a colde reason and no Argument, to say that a mans earnest desire to haue an Office argueth his desire of priuate gaine & profit, and so for his great desire to do good: condemne him of euil without proof therof. Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) I do not so barely reason neither so nakedly as you haue alleaged if you did mée right in repetition of my Argument, not intercepting the same nor seuering the partes therof as you haue don, and so haue answered the first part by it self which is the weakest and haue said nothing to the second part which is their great purchase and the strength & effect of the first, for my Argument taken wholy together is thus much to say, that their great desire to haue the Offices, and their great purchase of Lands and liuing following the same, sheweth that from the beginning there was ment nought els but priuate pouching, for euer the act that is last in erception: is the first in Imaginatiõ in all mens doings this is moste assured. Neighbour (quoth our Hoast) this Argument of yours which you holde so forcible is of no force at all, whither the parties therof be considered iointly or seuerally, neither doth this great desire to be in Office, neither ẏ great purchase ensuing the same in any wise disproue my first Assertion and maintenaunce of this great reuenues, fées and charges as you suppose, construing and taking my saying to nèer vnto the letter. For wheras I haue alleadged the Magistrates and Officers to be the Patrons and Fathers of the common welth, and these great reuennes a publick treasure in their hands to the vses and intents aboue rehersed: yée alleadge against mée their great purchase of Lordships, Lands and Liuings as a repugnancis and dispraise therof, which it is not but the greatest & strongest confirmation ther of that I my self haue alleaged, for although I haue made them receiuers yet haue I not charged them mérly as Receiuers: but as Baylifs & Gardens of trust whose authoritie extẽdeth to improue for ẏ benefit of their Cũtries. But a better Improuement can there not be made: then by altring of money which is transitory: into land which is permanent

manent, namely bæing deliuered vnto them at their yæres of discretion vpon the account of their said Balifs or gardẽs. And euen as it fareth betwæn the Garden and his pupil, ỹ Balifs and him to whose vse he is put in trust. So fareth it betwæn these Magistrates and Officers and the common welth as touching these receits.

And therfore these purchases of lands & possessions the best and moste allowable discharge vpon their account that can possible be made vnto God, the greatest and highest aduaũcement of his honour and glory, the greatest and moste assured comfort and stay of his godly people and seruants vnto whõe the payment of the money from hand to hand had bæn but a tẽporall and a short releef, for euery man hath not the gouernment ne right vse therof, so slipper is it and fugitiue.

But these Lands in the hands of these Landlords are a stay perpetuall and permanent wherunto the godly and honest person is sure of preferment and that for reason for why the Owners are such in whome is no acceptaunce of Worship, Frændship, or of the greater offer, neither of other thig then vertue and godlynes, and therfore their rent must nœds be easie, for who should rate it by out bidding when the vngodly is no chapman neither dare prefẽt him self in the place for the godly persõ doth if no not vnto the wicked much lesse vnto his godly Brother or Neighbour. This is no small commendation of Vertue and godlynes and no small encouragement therto, namely where a man may make as sure & a more sure account of his Farme: then some other can make of their Inheritaunce and patrimony, which thing although it sæm straunge: yet is it commonly verified in the Farmers of such Landlords. For wee see to often that diuerse honest & godly Men leaue their Inheritaunce vnto vngodly and vnthriftie Children who (falling into the hands of th' executor) do little while inioy the same. The cause wherof is for ỹ they came to their lands before they came to their Wit, and bæing Owners wared therby proude and in state bæing vnder no mans check and disdaining all mens councel & so forgetting God and them selues fall to follie and then (as the Prophet Dauid saith) Their table is made a snare to take thẽ

and

and the things which should haue been for their proffit, are vnto them an occasion of falling. So fearfull and daungerous is the singuler and sole propietie of great Lands and possessions, as that often times it not only bereaueth the owners of their right wit and Judgemẽts: but also through their pride, vnthriftines and prodigalitie it hazardeth the sincere administration & execution of lawes and Justice, procuring partialite and fauour to vngodlynes and dissolute liuing, whilste they (whose dutie were to rebuke such persons and to restrain their libertie) had rather enter into their large reuenues and possessions and to take and vse the opportunitie of their wickednes and retchlesnes as the meetest occasion herto. But in these Farmers and in their posteritie otherwise it is and that for the reuerend and honourable regarde betwéen them and their Land Lords at whose hands and during whose good wil and pleasure they holde their liuings & whose great liberalitie and benignitie chargeth them with no small expectation aswel of godly and honest conuersation of life, as also of holpitalitie and charitable dealing with their Brethren and Neighbours beeing by their meanes very wel enabled therunto. These things (I say) are looked for at their hands and that by them whose expectation they dare not nor can not without great shame falsifie: which godlynes, thriftines and liberalitie in them is of no small force to moue others therunto, and so mutuall loue and charitie cherished betwéen euery degrée, & where these things are, God hath promised to blesse that house, Town, Cittie or Cuntry.

It can hardly be spoken and much hardlyer written how greatly and how mightily this procureth and aduaunceth Learning, Godlynes and Vertue, how much it furthereth the desire of contemplation and godly exercises of the minde, against which there is no Impediment nor hinderaunce so great as either the destitution or want of a competent liuing and maintenaunce, orels the dayly feare to be supplanted or disapointed therof, and consequently the thoughts and cares either to prouide for a competent liuing orels to maintaine and defend the same against the dayly Allarmes and assaults of the Couetous and the vngodly against which the benigni-

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tie and goodnes of Owners and Land lords is the greatest yea the only protection. These are the effects and frutes of these purchases alleadged by you to be made by ỹ gains, fees and reuenues aforesaid which dow far differ from the common purchasing of other priuate persons by whõe (through your Ignorance or els of malice) you dow Judge and measure these which are in nothing like nor comparable, as the effects and frutes therof will euidently declare, namely in the purchase of the Merchant, the Chapm ã, the Grasier, the Clothier and such other like Artificer whatsoeuer, at ỹ hands of all which persons no such thing is hoped or looked for. First for ỹ they dow not sustain any such charge of expectation, neither is any reason that they should, except a Shoomaker bying an Ore hide for three shillings & fourepẽce, might sel shoes for twentie shillings a paire: for that would alter the case. Therfore as his calling is base and mean: so is his Judgement as touching Vertue and the Felicitie and end of mans life, which hee Judgeth to consist in getting and hauing, for that hee seeth men accounted and esteemed therafter, and other or farther Contemplation hath hee very little or none. So that in his Oppinion hee spedeth his matters wunderful wel if hee return his Chaffer to his gain, & the more and greater so much the better, be it land or lease of Farme or house, if he can sel it again for double or treble that it cost him or let it for three times the rent that hee payeth him self for it. All this hee accounteth honest gain and very wisely handled, so that when hee hath any thing to let or set vp goeth the Drum & as welcome to him the Deuil of hel, yea Belzabub him self as the Godlyest person in England, yea as an Aungel of heauen, for godlynes, vertue or honestie is the last question that hee wil aske, onely Quid vultis mihi dare? Thus is the godly person sure to be put back or els to take the thing to his vtter detriment, so that vpon the matter no question or difference whither of them sped, for the euil man is made a great deale wurse, namely for that the greatnes of his rent stoppeth the mouth of him whose rebuke hee should moste feare & whome hee would and should moste reuerence and regarde, and therfore wil hee be as wicked and as vngratious and corrupt as

many others as hée can and dare for feare of the lawes. The godly person although hée gladly would doo good: yet wanteth hée power therto being ouer set with the greatnes of his rēt, so that in conclusion whether the good or euil may spéed: they are forced to deale hardly with the world wherby aryseth little or no amitie, fréendship or charitable looue among men but euen all for the peny as among méer Straungers nor any zeale vnto God nor to doo any good for his sake.

By all these Arguments, it appéereth manifestly how much it were to be wished and desired at the hands of Almightie God, that only or chéefly such were purchasers & Land lords whose very estates and callings and the manner of the getting of their gains wherwith they purchase doo charge them with a reuerend and fatherly regarde in letting and setting the same to the honor and glory of God who hath so mightily blessed them, yea so far abooue all that they euer could without shame haue wished or desired, so heaping hot coles vpon their heds in their vnthankfulnes aud dealing otherwise, which (as I haue alredy said) is not or at ẏ least not so greatly to bée hoped or looked for at their hands of bace and mean calling. And therfore Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) admitting and confessing the greatnes of their purchase: yet can yée not conclude against mée the proper or priuate receit or imploying of Charges, Fées & reuenues aforesaid neither will I graunt it vnto you, for the slaunderous and shamefull consequence which it inferreth necessaryly as hath already béen duly prooued.

Pierce repeteth the Reasons and Arguments of Simon and cōfuteth thē by proof and experience demōstratife as from the cause to the effect and that vpon his ovvne knovvledge.

Cha. 10.

Eighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) yée haue made as your self doth suppose many strong reasõs & conclusiõs to approue ỹ first aselling and ỹ now receiuing of eight pence or twelue pence for a sheet of paper, and other excessiue and vnreasonable Fées and charges of sutes as not only tollerable, iust and reasonable: but also godly and moste conducible vnto the common welth, and to the prosperous and good estate therof, namely for that these Fées & charges were ment and yet are the punishment of vice and the rewarde of godlynes & vertue. And also ỹ they were & yet are ment a publike treasure in the hands of the Receiuers therof, to all godly vses, intents and purposes.

Wherunto I answered, alleadging the grrat purchase of Lands and Lordships by the Receiuers of the same as a thig repugnant and contrary to your Assertion, wherunto you haue replied that their great purchase is not only contrary to your first Assertion but a confirmation of the same.

For you say that their purchase of lands is a prouision wt out comparison more assured and permanent then were or could haue bẽn the distribution of the money or any parte therof from hand to hand, and also that the effects and frute therof are moe and greater and do stretch farther and more generally and vniuersally do procure the honor and glory of God, and the publique welth, peace and quietnes.

To prowe that these things are so: you haue alleadged the honorable calling of the Magistrate and Officer, and ỹ great expectation that hée susteineth bothe before God and Men, & also the reuerend oppinion ỹ wée are bound to haue of him.

Yée haue also alleadged that the first causes of all these greate gains and profits are such as of dutie hée is bound to persecute and not to prosecute, namely for that they are vngodlynes, wickednes and all kinde of vice, by the gain wherof (say you) no honest nor godly person can without great shãe thriue and wax rich, much lesse the Magistrate and Officer vpon whose great expectation hẽrin you do so greatly insist.

Truely Neighbour (quoth hée) all these are godly and also godly reasons and do very wel prowe how things either

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haue béen orels how things ought to be.

But that they are so presently: these are either no proues at all or very small and so your argument gathered and concluded from posse to esse as I haue said already, and as I wil further proue by Arguments gathered from the cause vnto the effect and from the effect vnto the cause euen the very same that you haue alleadged, tying them togither in the same maner and fourme as your self haue alleadged them.

First you say that the originall cause of these grreat gains, Fées and reuenues was the hate that the first Assessors therof bare vnto vngodlynes, wickednes and all kinde of vice, the fauour and good affection which they bare vnto Vertue, and godlynes, and therin they ment the punishment of the one and the preferment and aduauncment of the other, and so you conclude lewdnes, vnthriftines and vngodlynes to haue béen and yet stil to be the first cause of these great gains, Fées and reuenues, and these great Fées and reuenues their effect, the effect of these fées, proffits and reuenues yée haue alleadged or rather I my self haue alleadged, and you haue confessed and iustified to be the great perquisition and purchase of Lordships, lands and possessions by the Magistrates and Officers Receiuors of the same.

The effect of their great purchase is by you aleadged to be a prouision, a stay of liuing and patrymony for the Godly and honest People of the common welth, and for their assuraunce, peace and quietnes. The effect of so good a prouision for the Godly: you haue alleadged to be the increase of them, and the decrease of the wicked, vnthriftie and vngodly, the effect of the increase of godly people you haue alleadged to be mutuall loue & charitie and all good affection bothe towards God and also one to an other, the effect wherof you haue alleadged to be the manifolde blessings of God according to the saying of the Prophet in the hundred thrée & thirtie Psalme.

Thus haue you argued from the first causes producing their effects, and from those effects as from causes of their effects very orderly and very probablie but not necessarilye as I haue alreadye alleadged, and as I dout not héerafter

I shall prowe vnto you so directly and so evidently that you shall either confesse your owne prowes fallible and falls: or-els you must and shal say that causes produce no effects or els clean contrary effects, which is to reuerse and to ouerthrow the order of Nature and all the law and rule of reason as to say there can be a Father or a Mother without a Sonne or a Daughter or that betwéen a man or a woman there should be begotten a dogge or a cat. And for prof hérof I wil alleadge bothe reason as strong as you haue alleaged any: and also myne owne experience which I my self haue dérly bought and paid for. I pray you Neighbour let mée hear that (quoth our Hoast.)

Pierce Plowmans first tale for that purpose where hee sheweth how his Neighbour and hee went to the Tauern and to the dãcing Schoole and what hapned there.

Cha. 11.

AT my béeing in London this last terme (quoth Peirce) it fortuned one after noone hauing little or nothing to do, as God knoweth what Idlenes and vngodlynes commeth of our idle wayting and attending vpon our dayes of hearing as they tearm them, when in the mean time wée run vp and down in the stréets, and if happily wée méet with any Frend or acquaintaunce it is holden great humanitie to offer him the curtesie of Londõ, which is as much to say to haue him to the Tauern & there to sit bibbing vntil neither of thẽ can scant finde the way forth again. So as I was about to tel you, one day amongst all others wæ met a company of Neighbours and Frends togither in Poules sir in number all Cuntrie men and Neighbours, saue one that was a Londoner a Neighbour borne of ours, who was our Leader to many a good place dout you not, so on Gods name néds wée must to the Tauern, and so wæ went to the Tauern, there fast by, wherby that time wæ cãe forth again: our heds were better laden with beare then with Wit, so on Gods name

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when our heds were wel fraughted: wee muſt néeds go to ſée ſome pleaſures of the Cittie that were ſtraunge and noueltie vnto vs of the Cuntrie, and ſo on Gods name wée went into a dauncing Schole not very far thence, now was there one man of our Company that was as deaf as a doze naile.

¶When wée weare come into the Schole: the Muſitions were playing and one dauncing of a Galiard, and euen at our entring hée was beginning a trick as I remember of ſixteens oz ſeuentéens, I do not very wel remẽber but wunderfully hée leaped, ſlung and tok on, which the deaf man beholding, and not hearing any noyſe of the Muſick, thought verily that hée had bẽn ſtark mad and out of his wit, and of pure pittie and compaſſion ran to him and caught him in his armes and held him hard and faſt. The Dauncer not knowing his good meaning and taking it to the wurſt, and hauing a Dagger drew it out and ſmot the man a great blowe vpon the hed, and brake his hed very ſore.

The man ſore moued and grẽued therwithall, and bẽeing a man of great ſtrength: threw him from him with all his ſtrength among the Muſitiõs, and hée lighting vpon one of the greateſt and faireſt Vialles, brake it all in pẽces.

Therwithall vp ſtart the Muſitions for him and wée for to help the other bẽeing our Frends and Neighbours, and then went out Daggers, vp went Pantofles, all the reſt of the Inſtruments in the the throng were all to trodden and broken, and but that Neighbours hearing the noiſe & buſtling came in and parted vs: ſurely ſome of vs had bẽn in grea daunger to haue bẽn ſlain.

I loſt my Cloke and had my hed broken and ſo had thrée of my Neighbours moe, and hardly the Muſitions and their part takers went not ſcotfrée. But ſhortly to end & come to my purpoſe: you ſhall heare what followed.

Firſt and formoſte wé were all arreſted and committed to Priſon for a fraie and bloodſhed, where I think you may make no queſtion if it coſt vs any thing before wé gat out again. But hauing paid our Fées there, and thinking verily that the wurſt had bẽn paſt: euen at our comming forth from thence wé were all newly arreſted by latitates and re-

remained vntil wée had put in Suretiee to appéere at the day of the return of the writ in the Kings bench. So wée laid our purses togither and went to a worshipful and learned Lawyer that had béen of our councel aforetime, and shewed him the declarations that were against vs, wherof the first was at the sute of the Dinner of the scole, wherin hée alleadged that with force and armes wée had entred into his house and beaten, wounded and euil intreated his Seruants, by reasō wherof hée had lost their seruice by the space of eight dayes, to his hinderaunce and damage sixpound, and also then and there thrée Instruments of Musick commonly called Vialls did spoile and breake to his losse and hinderaunce sixpound.

Besides this, euery of his Seruants the parties thēselues seuerally declared against vs all iointly of an assault and battery made vpon them, and that wée had beaten, wounded & euil intreated them to their seuerall damages fortipence, the Dauncer himself declared seuerally against the deaf man for assaults and battery, vpon all which matters wée prayed his councel and aduise, his answere was shortly ẏ in his opinion the law was against vs in all & euery of our cases wherof hée gaue vs the causes & reasōs as I shall reherse vnto you.

To the first point of the first delaration for forcible entrye wée praied his reason, how or by what reason our entrie might be said forcible séeing the doores were open, and if they had béen shut our cōming in was but to hear & sée, & our meaning not hurtful to any man. His answere therunto was that a mans meaning that commeth into my house shalbe cōstrued and taken to haue béen such from the beginning as is his act there don after he is entred, for ẏ shalbe taken for his meaning & the declaratiō therof, namely where hée entreth wout speciall cōmaundemēt or licēce of the party, & because (saith hée) that after your entry into ẏ house yée did there cōmit a force & an vnlawful act: therfore your first entry & comming into the house shalbe déemed & iudged vnlawful & forcible. Then wée asked how or by what reason our act could be said vnlawful which was but ẏ taking of a man in his armes of very goodwill to stay him thinking that he had béen mad & out of his wit and might haue mischeiued him self. His aun-

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ſwere therunto was that therin the act was not lawful noꝛ iuſticiable but a Treſpaſſers although no farther harme had enſued therupon, which yet (by your confeſſion) there did, foꝛ to ſpeak generally: it is not lawful to imbꝛace oꝛ ſtrain any man againſt his wil, foꝛ if him liſt to take it to the wurſt (eſpecially if there enſue any euil vnto the partie therby) it ſhal not help the party to ſay that hee ment him good oꝛ at ẏ leaſt no euil therby, foꝛ although that in felony the intent doth qualifie the fact it is not ſo in Treſpaſſers wherfoꝛe your act was not lawful noꝛ Iuſticiable except yee had bẽn Officers oꝛ otherwiſe ẏ yee had come in & found thẽ doing ſome felonious oꝛ vnlawful act, by means wherof yee had had ſufficiẽt coullour to haue laid yourhãds vpon thẽ, foꝛ euery man is an Officer foꝛ peace ſake & foꝛ the pꝛeſeruatiõ therof, & then (quoth hee) your caſe had bẽn otherwiſe, vnto this wee aunſwered that our act in all reaſon ſeemed moꝛe lawful and tollerable then theirs, foꝛ that in their exercile there is little good purpoſe oꝛ none at all, noꝛ better end oꝛ purpoſe then to induce ſuch euil and vnhappy euents and conſequents as hapned in this caſe of ours, and that therfoꝛe their cauſe ought not to haue fauour againſt vs as if wee had hindꝛed oꝛ interrupted their honeſt oꝛ lawful exercile in any godlynes oꝛ in any thig tending vnto vertue, to the glozy of God oꝛ to the pꝛofit of the common welth. His aunſwere vnto that was that we are not to diſpute of that which the reuerend and honoꝛable Magiſtrates haue eſtabliſhed yea & holden in no ſmall reputatiõ, it falleth foꝛ ẏ Magiſtrates, Rulers & Officers to beare with them in all incidents & caſualties otherwiſe ſhould they diſalowe their owne Acts and be contrary vnto them ſelues, which were inconuenient. Then wee demannded of him why foꝛ the firſt Viall that was bꝛoken: the Maiſter ſhould not bꝛing the action againſt the Dauncer who in very deed was the bꝛeaker therof, and not the other man. His aunſwer therunto was that in very deed wee were bothe Treſpaſſers vnto him alike, & he at his libertie & election to take his remedy againſt vs bothe oꝛ againſt any of vs foꝛ (quoth hee) although ẏ dauſer were ẏ materiall cauſe yet was ẏ other man ẏ efficiẽt cauſe therof, as foꝛ pꝛoof, if a carter wilfully dꝛiue his

cart ouer

oner a man, woman or Childe, bothe the cart, the horses, and the Carter are guiltie of the fact wherof the deaf man is not excusable neither can plead not guiltie to the fact, because hée was the first and chéef efficient cause, therupon wée moued vnto him this question, why the Musitions them selues should not be said to be the first efficient cause séeing ỳ without their noise the Daũcer would not so haue fared nor taken on, neither the deaf man haue taken him for a madde man, as bothe you and wée would haue don if wée had bẽn in his case, and had heard no more then hée heard.

Unto that his answere was, that whatsoeuer it séemed vnto him or vnto vs, it is (quoth hée) at your peril, and at all mens perils els that resorte & haunt to such places to put on all our Sences, wits and vnderstandings, and also to desire God to giue them wisdome and his grace to Judge wisely & wel to digest such things as they heare and sée therin, and ỳ wée be not snared in euil thorugh ignorant appetite of our sences vnto our hinderaunces more then wée our selues are able of our selues to Judge or think, for (saith hée) séeing wée are not able, neither is our authoritie to blame or challenge the places, neither to disalowe the things there professed, which were to derogate from the Magistrate.

Yet if wée haue so much grace of God as to be Magistrates vnto our selues and in such cases to blame and reproue our selues, and our owne sences, and inordinat desires, either in due time before wée are fallen, orels in some reasonable time, and with our reasonable losse and hinderaunce it may suffice for answere vnto vs by them vnto whome otherwise wée must crẽp and pray our redresse neither able to craue it at their hands without an inconuenience aforesaid, which is condemn and disalowe the things by them selues allowed and established.

Wée asked him what reason there was that wée should be charged in seuerall actions and vnto seuerall Persons, for one trespasse, as namely vnto the Maister and also to the seruants. His answere therunto was that the Maister hath a speciall interest in his seruant for ỳ profit hée is to receiue by his seruice for which seruice hée is to recouer & not for the

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hurt don vnto the person for the partie him self recovereth for that. To be short, his resolution was that for all our harmes and losse that wée had gotten: wée weare so far from all hope of redresse or amends, that wée were in the worse case in our defẽce against thẽ & very like to yéld amends by iudgement of law. And thus you sée (quoth Pierce) how poore guiltlesse & simple men in a far honester cause are put to ẏ worser end. Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) as for ẏ, be as bée may. But truely Neighbour you had but euil successe in going to sée pleasure and to heare Musick, and yet trust mée if yéwil, I suppose ẏ you sped a great deale better then a nũber spéd in such like places, who think neuertheless themselues to haue sped there wel, and come away right wel contented, which in very déed is the only cause why in my fantasie they spéd worse then you, for why you are hurt and féel it, but they are hurt but haue no féeling therof vntil their hurt be past all cure, for a man is neuer so daungerously sick or sore as when hée hath lost the sence and féeling of the sore or of the sicknes. So fareth it in such persons as these, for although they féel no euil that they contract, and yet in such places, yet don they carry thence with them the séeds and radicall causes of great Infortunes as the woful and lamentable end of many a good mans Childe hath witnessed dayly, doth & wil. But truely Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoast) you are waxen more then half a Lawyer by these meanes.

Nay soft (quoth Pierce) I haue an other matter to tel you and that almosse as straunge as this, and that chaunced to my self in a mischaunce about a foure yéres past, I pray yét let vs heare it quoth our Hoast, marry quoth Pierce, thus it hapned, A Frẽnd of mine would néeds giue mée my dinner at an Ordinary table where wée fared very daintily, but I promise you for myne owne parte I haue thought my self better at ease many a time & oft with bread & chéese in other Company. So Sir in the name of God when dinner was don: in stéed of grace to ẏ dice they went on euery side vpon proper square tables fit I warrãt you for ẏ purpose, & there to the hazard they go xx. s. xl. s. v. l. vi. l. a cast, I stood by and beheld. Anon there came a Straunger a plain homely fellowe of the Cuntrye much like my self and hée séeing such

lums of money vpon the boorde, and the dice trotting to & fro, and that now one snatched a heap and now an other snatched an heap, and therwithall such deuout swearing, hée came to mée and rowning mée in the eare, asked mée whose weare all those heaps of money that weare laid forth, marry (quoth I) his that can get them, get them (quoth hée) how? Marry (quoth I) by hazard, say you so (quoth hée) claime they no farther propertie in their money but by hazard whether them selues shall haue their money or an other man? no verily (quoth I.) What are those white things full of black spots that are so chaced to and fro? Those (quoth I) are called dice vpon whome standeth the hazard, & therwithall my Frend and I hauing dined and dispatched: went our way forth toward the Temple, and before wée had gon so farre as a man might shoot a Bird bolte: there arose an outcry behinde vs, stop the théef, stop the théef, and therwithall I loked behinde mée: and loe the fellowe of whome I tolde you, came running with bothe his hands ful of money and after him ran the ruler of the Ordinary and thrée or foure of his seruants as fast as euer they could run with hue & cry, wée turned not back neither made vs to dw therin. So they followed him vntill they came as farre as Saint Dunstanes Church, and there the fellowe béeing out of breath, turned again and catching ỹ Maister of the dicing house in his armes: cryed I haue him I haue him, this is ỹ théef (quoth hée) Now was ỹ thrõg so great that a man could not know which was which vntil at the last the Officers came and tok them bothe and knowing the Maister of the dicing house: asked him what the matter was.

Mary (quoth hée) this Villain Théef hath robbed diuers men of Worship my Guests of great summes of money and I haue followed him for hée fled vpon the felony. And therehée had spied mée in the Cõpany & bad thẽ lay holde vpon mée for this knaue (quoth hée) gaue him ỹ coũcel & is as false a théef as hée. There was no more to say, I was & laid holde vpõ apprehended, and bothe hée and I caried before a Iusticer of peace the Fellowe and I, my Frend would not leaue mée but went with mée to sée and heare the end. So Sir, when wée were come before the Iusticer: hée laid fore to the Fellowes

charge

charge that hée had broken his house forcible and burglarlie and had feloniously robbed foure Gentlemen of worship his Guests of diuers summes of money feloniously and against the Queens lawes and peace. Sirra (quoth the Justice) what saist thou to this? Sir quoth the fellowe I beseech you to stād my good Frend and Maister and let mée haue but law & reason at your hands, I trust it appéreth vnto your discretion (quoth hée) that this matter alleadged against mée is not sufficient to put mée to answere therunto. First for the forcible entrie into his house and burglarye supposed: I say his house was open, and daily is and to long hath béen and vnto to many if it pleased God and the Magistrate such as your Worship is, for I vndertake hée that hath any thing to lose and cast away: néed neither breake doore nor wall to leaue it behinde him there, and somuch for mine answere vnto that part. As to the money supposed to be stolne: hée declareth no certaintie therof, neither conueieth to him self any property therin, and so no felony of ỳ thing wherto no man claimeth propertie, very true it is (quoth hée) that I came into his house and séeing a company standing about a square Table & diuers greet heaps of money laid forth therupō: I asked this honest man that was a stander by meaning (mée) what was ment therby, and also by two white square things full of black spots that were chased to and fro vpon the bord, hée answered mée that they were playing at the dice, for that is quoth hée the name of those square bones, and said farther ỳ the name of their game was hazard. When I had heard him say so: I considered with my self that there might be good to be don for mée among them, for hauing wel marked their order: I found them the moste indifferent People to gain by that euer I met withall in my life, for I perceiued that hée that laide the money downe: the rest meant that hée should neuer take it vp again, and for his part hée ment aswell vnto them and that all this stood in the fauour of hazard, and so often time it chaunced accordingly, to wit that the box béeing the third persō: caught a share and by no other nor better title then mée thought my self to haue, for mée thought I was as indifferent to euery of them as was the box or as any of

them was to ouer, for I verily thought and yet do that if neither of them euer fingered that laid down either had his desire against other, moreouer quoth hée, when I beheld such lewde and shameful mispending of ỳ time, such horrible swearing and blaspheming & knew not where neither vnto whõe to complain for reformation therof & thought in Conscience I ought not to suffer it as farforth as were in my might, & I saw no way so likely to redresse it as to take away ỳ cause which I perceiued was the money: I thought that bothe by law and good Conscièce I might do it and ought also, and in this deliberation I awaited my time and snatched vp al that I could lay holde vpon and came my way, wherupon I pray your discretion and whether this be fellony wherin there is title or at ỳ least cullour of title. A Sirra quoth the Iusticer, you are a cũning thef indeed, it is time to lok to such knaues as you are. Sir quoth the poore fellowe, I beseech you be good to me, I am a poore man and I trust, sauing against them ỳ lost the money the money is mine against all men and as vn to thẽ whẽ they demaũd me: let me answere. And as touching that honest man quoth hée, by me, I neuer delt with him nor neuer saw him before, to be short the Fellowe was committed to Newgate, and I was fain to finde suretie by recognisaunce to appéer at the next sessions there to make answer to such mater as should then and there be laid to my charge, and that cost mée fiue shillings and this was all that I got by hauing my dinner giuen mée.

And what said your Lawyer to you for this said our Hoast, what comfort doth hée giue you of amends against the partie that thus misused you, truely (quoth Pierce) hée vtterly discourageth mée to stur or meddle farther therin, and all vpon the same reasons that hée made before otels the very like in effect. Truely Neighbour quoth our Hoast, that Lawyer was no Counceller neither for your purpose and much lesse for his owne. Why so Neighbour (quoth Pierce:) marry quoth our Hoast, for there is no courage in him, neither hath he ỳ way to help him self, & to kæp you in dwig, in ỳ he giueth such coũcel to peace & quietnes, vnto such fellowes as you ỳ would gladly cut hi out worke if him self were not his owne hinderãce. Nay surely Neighbour q Pierce, what councel

soeuer

soeuer he had giuen me therin, or what councel he or any o-ther of them all shall hereafter giue me in such matters: I am taught alredy though to my cost, while I liue to loue peace & ensue it, & to loue mine owne house, my honest labour & trauel and chefly & aboue all other things to serue God, wherin I finde the only stay and comfort of mans life to rest, & that when all is sought and tried: there is none other rule ne leuel wel and surely to guyde & order our affaires & dwings.

The application of Pierces tale by the Hoste, that the great charges of the Lawe is profitable to the common welth, and a repressing of vice and sinne. Chap. 13.

AYa, very wel said then (quoth our Hoste) I am glad that yet at the last ye are come to ỳ point whereunto I haue all this while laboured to bring you, which is to cõfesse that these great and excessiue charges and expences haue reformed and changed you from an vngodly & troublesome man: to a godly, wise and prudent man, able to giue councell not only priuatly and to your owne frends and family: but also to beare office and authoritie in your Parish, yea in ỳ whole Shire where we bothe dwel, so that I hope from henceforth we shall haue great store of you, and that of the greatnes of such fées and charges of sutes in Law, and of the first Assessors and the now receiuers therof ye are vtterly concluded & estopped to speak or think saue in all honor & reuerence. Do you think so Neighbour (quoth he?) Yea verily quothe he, for you haue confessed all this your reformation & amendmẽt to haue comen thence, & lok what effect it hath wrought in you: ye are of charitie bound to think that it hath wrought, worketh & wil work in a number moe then you, & the mony that you haue or rather think that haue departed frõ: is in their hands who are treasurers therof, as I haue alleaged towards the good and godly vses, intents & purposes ỳ may or shall arise hereafter in cõmon benefit, to wit, seruice of the whole common welth, wherin your parte is as far forth as theirs. Do ye call this a mending Neighbour Simon quoth Peirce? In very dede quoth he, I must nedes confesse, that these great and excessiue Charges and large Expences haue

rebuked me, haue chastised and amended me, but to say that I think or iudge it thank worthy vnto them that haue receiued my money: I say the Deuill kisse his arse that so amendeth me or any frend of mine, for verily such amending in my iudgement, deserueth almuch and the very like thanks as did the Wife, who gaue her husband two strong poysons, meaning to speed him in deed, but the poysons being of contrary natures: wrought one vppon an other, and destroyed either others force, wherby the man being hardly handled for a season, yet being driuen into a lax by their extremetie: auoyded them bothe and with them much corruption, so that where before he was a very corrupt body: he was by their clensings the better xx. yeres after. Thus she did him good by accident, but far from her intent or purpose, and vtterly against her will. And surely they that take so excessiuely of me and of others our money, & by that kinde of punishment amend and reforme vs: I holde them worthy as much thank therfore as was this Wife at her husbands hand for his amendment which was wrought by her meane. For I dare safely vndertake, that for our affliction and punishment, or for the dishonor of God and other vngodlines that dependeth therupon: they are as sorowfull as was the parish Clark of a Towne that was sore visited with the Plague, who said vnto his wife vpon a day. Wife (quoth he) if there come two corpses to day: we will haue a shoulder of Mutton and a quart of Sack to supper, & if there come but one: we will haue a shoulder of Mutton and but a pinte of Sack. Content husband (quoth she). And verily I think that as hartily as this good man & his Wife prayed for their recouery that were visited: so hartily pray these for peace, quietnes and the honor and seruice of God, and the Godly & charitable dealing and liuing of their Neighbours and Brethren.

☞ *Pierce prooueth that the sufferaunce of vvickednes and vngodlines: increaseth their gayne vvho are and should be the rebukers and punishers therof, and that to be the cause of great iniustice & vnrighteousnes.* Chap. 14.

Neighbour

NEighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) I pray you let me further vnderstand what yée doo meane by this History, for it should séeme ẏ ye haue alleadged it against me, not with standing that it maketh for me by the wunderfull effect which you your self are forced to confesse, that it hath wrought vpon you. I knowe what I haue confessed Neighbour (quoth Pierce) and also in what maner I haue confessed it, far enough from your purpose or any confirmation therof. And where in maintenance of these great fées and reuenues you haue alleaged that they are publique, & also how many and how good and godly are the'ffects and frutes therof: without proofe made of them or of any one of them, either by your owne experience or by other necessary demonstration. There in proofe of the contrary to wit, ẏ they are proper and priuate, and therfore excessiue and vnreasonable which is my assertion, I haue brought you this proofe of mine owne experience, wherby I haue sufficiently shewed that the first causes of all these great gaines and profits are prosecuted as I haue affirmed and not persecuted as you pretend. For I haue partely shewed you héere what leaue & libertie the cōmon people namely youth hath to followe their owne lust and desire, in all wantonnes and dissolution of life. For further proofe wherof: I call to witnesse the Theaters, Courtaines, Heauing houses, Rifling boothes, Bowling alleyes and such places where the time is so shamefully mispent, namely the Sabaoth dayes vnto the great dishonor of God, and the corruption and vtter destruction of youth. All which (I say) are either the causes or the effects of these great gaynes and reuenues, or els bothe causes and effects interchaungeably. For I dare vndertake that if either these gaynes and profits were publique as you pretend', or els if there were as great gayn and profit to the Magistrates and Officers, in the godly liues and honest conuersation of the common people as there is in the cōtrary: these harbours of vngodlines & misnurture, would haue lesse fauour and maintenaunce then they haue, and godlines, Sobrietie and mode-

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stie of liues & maners: would be in greater estimation then they are, and the honor and glory of God more aduaunced therby. But alas that the honor and glory of God and the vaine glory, pomp and maiestie of man cannot stand togither, & that one of them must néeds fall in the others exaltation, for certainly the more libertie vnto wickednes & sinne, and the more falling from God through the same: and the more humbly complainings vnto your good Lordships, and vnto your good Worships. The more Recognances for the peace and good a bearing, aswell by the Godly as by the vngodly, the one inuading and the other defending: the more praying, paying, waiting, attending, dowking, crowding, & courtesying, procuring of frendship by meanes, bribing of his flatterer, & bribing of her flatterer, this driueth ỳ great welth and abundance into fewe mens hands. For where the vngodly through misgouerment is fallen into daunger of the Law, what will he not giue to redéeme his life or his infamye: yea euen vnto them who were the first causes and occasions of his fall into such folly and mischaunce through libertie and not restraint of the contempt of God, his Lawes, and seruice, which he will not fayle to measure and fully to reward vnto all libertines, contemners and despisers of his maiestie and will, giuen then ouer into a reprobate minde, from vice vnto vice, vntill he hath fully brought him to naught. So dangerous and fearful a thing is libertie and not restraint of ỳ beginning of euill, which although they appéer not such at the first: yet when they are come to their ripenes and haue brought forth their increase to wit, Fellonyes, Thefts, Man slaughter, Murder and such like: there is not so ignorant a person that will not say, the man or woman was neuer like to come to better end, namely for his euil and dissolute life in the beginning.

This libertie is in the hands of Magistrates and Officers to bid or to forbid, euen after as they will prefer the honor and glory of God, or els their owne welth, pomp and vayn glory. And therfore how hartily were it to be desired at the hands of GOD, that such as are Magistrates and Officers:

should

ſhould not be couetuo⁹, oꝛels ſuch as are coueto⁹ ſhould not be Magiſtrates, foꝛ hæroſ Iethro did warne Moyſes in ẏ xviij. of Exodus, talking wᵭ him cõcerning ẏ electiõ & choiſe of Magiſtrates & Officers, & bad him chooſe ſuch as hated couetiſe, & ſpake of no other vice. The cauſe wherof is apparant, to wit leaſt ẏ wickednes & vngodlynes of ẏ people came to be valuable let and ſet, rẽted & farmed, bought & ſolde, foꝛ what other thing is valuing, letting & ſetting, rẽting, buying & ſelling of offices whoſe value is moꝛe oꝛ leſſe accoꝛdīg to ẏ ſtate of the people & their diſhonournig of God therby. And where you maintain theſe great gains by their godly & wooꝛthy effects, ẏ firſt wherof you alleadge to be their great purchaſe of Loꝛdſhips, Lands & poſſeſſiõs & the effect therof you alleadge to be a pꝛouiſiõ & patrimony foꝛ ẏ good & godly, the effect wherof yee ſay is ẏ increaſe of them, & the decreaſe of ẏ cõtrary, the effect wherof you ſay is godlynes, vnanimitie, loue, charitie & benignitie one towards an other. And laſt of all ẏ effect therof be the manifolde graces & bleſſings of God, pꝛomiſed by God in ẏ Pſalmes to the houſe, town, Cittie oꝛ Cũtrie where theſe things are. From ẏ firſt cauſe to his effect I graũt your argumẽt, ẏ theſe great gains are cauſe of great purchaſe, but frõ ẏ purchaſe to his effects yee ſhew not how it is: but how it ought to be, foꝛ in ſtæd of ẏ effects wherof you haue ſpokẽ, I ſee many gay houſes ful of gay chineis, coſtly bãquetig houſes, Galleryes, bowling Alleis, ſtraunge toies of point deuiſe & wooꝛkmanſhip, but within I finde no man dwellig ſaue Pꝛide, who hath chaſed thẽce hoſpitalitie & charitie, & as foꝛ other pꝛefermẽt ẏ the godly haue at their hãdꝛ in any of their purchaſes: I ſee none but euen who will giue moſte, & can make mightieſt frends, & who thoſe are in our daies: ẏ vngodly, vnfaithful & vncharitable dealing ſo vniuerſally, doo plainly declare.

The people ſo euil giuẽ bothe yung & olde, ſo vngodly in liuing ſo vnciuil, yea ſo rude & barbaro⁹ in manners, wherin me thinketh they haue pꝛeuailed & increaſed moꝛe & moꝛe all after as theſe officeꝛ haue waxẽ moꝛe gaiful & ẏ deſire to haue thẽ greater. And therfoꝛe your diſtincton betweẽ their purchaſe & ẏ Merchãt, Chapmã, & other cõmon perſons whatſoeuer (lauing his pꝛobabilitie) vain & ridiculo⁹ to ẏ purpoſe.

Therfore Neighbour Simon (quoth Pierce) your reasõs are weak, and to maintaine the greatnes of their fées vnable. Abide Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoste, giue me leaue to answere you vnto these matters, and first because that in very déed probable reason giueth place to necessary proofe and demonstration, wherin ye suppose that ye haue gon beyond me, because that against my bare and naked reasons as you terme them, ye haue alleaged authoritie, and that of your owne experience: I will answere you with the like, & that of mine owne experience also, and more direct vnto my matter then any of yours, which are indéed indirect and stand in different, and I will proue that the Magistrate and Officer in the beginning was and yet is such as I haue alleaged, and also the first assessing of the said fées and reuenues, and their great vtilitie and necessitie, namely for the vses, intents and purposes aforesaid. For proofe wherof I will rehearse vnto you a matter which I my self did bothe heare and sée.

The Hoste maintaineth the contrary, and for disproofe therof, and for the proofe of his assertion: alleadgeth the purchase of a certain vvelthie Officer towards the Lavv. Chap. 15.

About two yéeres agon it was my fortune to be beyond London in Kent, at the house of a worshipfull Officer towards the Law, who not past a Moneth before my comming thither: had purchased a Lordship, wherin were diuers good Farmes, & their leases to expire at Michelmas then to come twelue Moneths. It came to passe one day of my béeing there: thither came a rich man dwelling not very far thence, whose suite was to this Gentleman to take one of his said Farmes in reuertion, and comming to him thus he began. Sir quoth he, I vnderstand ye haue bought such a Lordship, God giue ye ioy therof. Very true it is (q he.) Sir quoth this rich man, I pray you let me be your tenaunt of such a Farm, giuing more then any other man will giue for a fine. The rent of the Farm was v. l

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What wil ye giue me for a lease for xxi. yéres quoth this Gentleman? Sir quoth he, I wil giue ye an C. l. & vnto our Mistresse a Ueluet gown, & xx. Angels to buy her pinnes besides. You haue bidden like a chapman said the Gentleman, giue me leaue to be aduised vnto Munday next said he, and then I shall giue you an answere hérin, so causing him to tary dinner he let him depart, and this was vpon a Thursday.

The next day béing Friday: this Gentleman sent for the Farmer of the same péce of land, who came thither, & with him thrée handsome young men his sonnes. So when he was by the Landlords commaundement brought before him: he asked him of what age he was. He answered lxxv. yéres. He asked him how long he had dwelled in that Farm. He answered that he had dwelt there all his life for he was borne in it and his father before him. You knowe quoth the Gentleman that I am now become your Landlord. I knowe it very wel quoth he, and I beséech you of your fauour. What will you giue for a new lease of xxi yéres quoth the Gentleman? for you knowe your olde lease is nér an end. Sir quoth ỹ powre man, let me giue you reason, only that I may be able to dwe my Prince and your worship seruice, & to reléeue my powre neighbours as hitherto I haue done, and haue béene wel able. Very wel quoth the Gentleman, be héere againe vppon Munday next and then ye shall vnderstand more. The powre man (his duty don) departed. The next Munday béig Mũday next before Bartholmew day: the powre Man was come again, and brought with him a couple of fat Capõs, & about an houre or twaine after came this Churle very wel mounted his Gelding not déere of x.l. and behinde him was trussed a fat Buck, which he presented vnto the Gentleman by one of his seruants. To be short: he was willed to come in to the P. into a close little Parlor, whither were called also this olde Farmer & I my self, whom it pleased him to vouch safe all courtesie and humanitie bothe in this and also in other matters, so that only wée foure were there, sauing a young man attendant vpon his person. This don: the Gentleman began, frend quoth he, what accusatiõ don you bring

against this poore man pointing him to the Farmer. Sir q. he none, I do not knowe the man. No quoth the Gentlemã: except ye can accuse him of euil: ye haue alredy condemned your selfe therof, & would do me. Why so Sir quoth he: Mary Sir quoth the Gentleman, for he cannot be guiltlesse of euill: that seeketh the destructiõ and death of a guiltlesse man.

Sir quoth the fellowe, ye charge me wrongfully, I neuer sought any mans death. Sir quoth the Gentleman, he that seeketh to take away the sustenaunce of a mans life, ỹ man say I, seeketh his death, & that by so much a more cruel mean as it is a more cruell and fearfull death to starue of hunger or colde: then it is to be quickly and readily dispatched and murthered, and so sone rid out of payne. Ye haue quoth he, desired to take this poore mans Farm from him, beeing his only stay, and haue so bidden for it: that I know he may not liue but in extreme misery if he take it at your hands. Sir q. he, yée are the first great purchaser ỹ euer I heard of this opinion. I haue sir Farmes quoth he, takẽ all after this maner at their hands that do think them selues bothe wise and worshipfull, yet was there neuer put vnto me such a problem as this by any of them, yet drink I a C. l. a yéer by them abowe all charges. Frend quoth ỹ Gentleman, other mens doing are no president vnto me, further then they stand wt my dutie vnto God, and with the discharging of my calling, for he hath bidden vs by his prophet to stand vp and enquire after the olde wayes, and if they be good: then to goe in them or els not, which beeing spoken generally vnto all estates: how much more vnto them of my calling, and therfore admitting that such hard & extreme dealing might stand wt the dutie of euery priuat person, either vnto God or vnto their Countrye & common Welth, or els with their owne assuraunce which I vtterly deny, yet could it not stand with my dutie, nor of any man of my calling. First for the priuat person, & to proue that such extrẽe dealing standeth not with his dutie towards God, all his cõmandemẽts do manifestly proue wherin he so straightly cõmandeth vnto vs charitie, loue & benignitie one towards an other, wout the which a mã dare

not

not say that he loueth God whō he neuer saw, neither that he hath any faith, now what loue or charitie is there in him that letteth vnto his Neighbour a lease of hunger, want & all misery & calamitie, & so molesteth ỳ man, which God forbad to do vnto the Dre: The next, to wit, it standeth not wᵗ his dutie to the common welth, the very word common welth, doth sufficiently showe, for if a man liue in the cōmō welth: he must haue some of the ioyes & frutes therof, or els it is to him no common welth, namely traueling & labouring fore therin, neither will he that a man bear any good wil toward that common welth wherin the ioyes & sorowes, welth and woe are so vnequally deuided, & this standeth not with the assurance of the common welth, which increaseth by the vnitie, loue & concord, & falleth & decayeth by their contraryes.

These the two first bēing proued, it resteth me to proue ỳ such extreme taking & exacting standeth all with thassurance of the very partie him self in euery priuat mans case, & this seemeth straunger & harder to proue: then the residue hath beene, but it is not so. namely vnto him that goeth with the Prophet Dauid into the house of God & there inquireth therof, for there he shall plainly vnderstand that all is not clērly gotten that is put into the purse, for I my self haue knowen a number quoth he, that haue raised iiij. times double ỳ reuenues that their ancestors liued welthily & worshipfully vpō, yea & before their death would fayne haue solde land if they had had any.

The cause wherof is for that God who is not present nor called to councell in such extreme taking: wil neuer be present nor giue councel or aduise in the bestowing & spending of the same, either to his honor & glory: or els to their owne benefit, but giueth them ouer to delight in vile and vayne pleasures, and to be gainfull and beneficiall vnto the Ministers of voluptuousnes and sensualitie and flatterers, whose frendship endeth when the tap leaueth running, and when a mans owne liuing is gon and spent: there is nothing to be had at their hands but a mock or a flout.

But the Landlord that dealeth wel with his tenant hath of him an assured and vnfained Frend, and that is proued by the very duties and seruices which by our ancient lawes are incident vnto tennres. For what Frend or what Seruant shall a man finde that wil so abase him self as (kneeling vpon his knees, his hed vncouered, his waste vngirded, (holding his hands ioynt betwen the hands of his frend or Maister) wil say I become your man and faith wil beare you, sauing the faith which I owe vnto God and to my Prince. All which the homager doth vnto his Lord, what may not a man hope at his hands that is thus allied vnto him, this also is farther verified by the said honorable and ancient Lawe of this Land which doth giue vnto the Lord a writ of aid pour file marier aid pour fair son fitz Cheualier. and do binde the Tenaunt to serue his Landlord in the warres either in his person or by sufficient Deputie. In all which things the Law hath an honorable consideration to deliuer the Landlord from careful and heathenish desire, and care to gather for the preferment of his Children, being already assured where to leaue the same and neither charged with the gathering in or with the daungerous keeping therof, either from the Theef or from his owne misgouernment or intemperaunce of life in apparail or in diet, which are moste perrillous theeues. Also for the seruice of his Prince and his owne defence. It is not to tel what a masse of treasure is spent vpon how few men that are but hirelings and come but for their hire for the which they euer think they do to much and are alwaies ready to finde occasion of quarrel bearing (as I haue said) no lowe to the man nor seruing therefore but for the hire.

But of the Tenaunt it is and hath been wel proued to be otherwise and that in many a famous and memorable Journey happily atchieued by our Auncestors to their great commendation. Shortly this frendship dyeth not, but with the parties, except it be through the Landlords great default either selling the land and therwithall his dearest and moste assured Frends, or els by extream couetise and crueltie taking from him all mean to liue able to be a Frend.

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Bothe which things are now of late yéres waxen to common, the moze pittie. Thus it appéreth quoth hée, that such hard and extreame dealing standeth not with the dutie of any priuate person either toward God and his cõmon welth, noz with his owne assuraunce and countenaũce. How much lesse with our duties which excelleth theirs as far as heauen excelleth the earth, namely towardes God and our Country before whome wée sustain so great an expectation of godlines vertus and all benignitie, so largely and so liberally rewarded vnto a desire of priuate gaine and lucre from the beginning, which desire would likewise detect vs of all impietie of percialitie and fauour vnto all vngodlynes & wickednes, béeing the first causes of all our great gaine where through wée become Purchasers.

And therwithall he made an end and putting his hand in to his pocket: hée drew forth two Déeds indented, and causing his Clark to read the one parte which was a lease for one and twentie yéeres after the olde rent, he sealed & subscribed it, and in our presence deliuered it as his déed vnto the olde Farmer. The rich Fellow beholding this, took him to be very glad and prayed God therfore, so great & reuerẽd is the misery of godlynes (as saith Saint Paule) that euen they who in their déeds and works haue denyed the power therof, yet are they touched with remorce to reuerence it in others and to haue their déeds in admiration.

This matter thus ended the rich Fellowe toke his leaue and the next day I my self hauing ended my busines came away also. A A A A A A Amen quoth Pierce Plowman.

What meane you by such a very long Amen Neighbour Pierce quoth our Hoast? Beati qui audiunt. quoth Pierce, what mean you Neighbour quoth our Hoast? Nam miranda canunt quoth Pierce, I trow the man doteth quoth our host, Nay Neighbour quoth Pierce I am affraid least you doate your self, why? quoth our Hoast, doth this matter séeme so straunge and maruelous vnto you? I will tell you another matter which is as true as this and of myne owne experiens also. I pray you let mée heare Neighbour quoth Pierce.

An other tale by the Hoast of a yung Gentleman that had morgaged his Land, comming to an other great Officer of the Lavv to vvhome bee offered to sell his land of vvhome hee had great comfort.

Chap. 16.

IT foztuned an other time I was in Kent also at the house of an other great and rich Officer towardes the Lawe, where I had occasion to soiourn certain dayes, during which time there came thether a yung Gentleman to offer his Land to sel, and made an offer therof, vnto this man in my presence, vnto whome this Worshipful Lawyer spake in this maner.

Wherfore will you sel your Lands (quoth hee) being an auncient possession and a fair liuing? Sir (quoth this yung man) I am fallen into great det comming to my Lands before I was wise, and haue morgaged my Land for two hundred pound, which except I come with in these ten dayes: I vtterly lose my Land.

You haue brought your self into great extremitie (quoth this Gentleman) how be it, to sel your Land: mee think a very hard remedie therof, and great pittie if any other way might be taken, for hee that selleth away his Land: selleth away his best and moste assured Frend. Besides that to sel away namely his auncient Patrimony and which hee neuer bought: is bothe shameful and slaunderous as to haue disherited & destroyed his name, house & familie, which is an odious thing & the thing which the good Naboth the Iesraelite denyed euen vnto the King of Israel, for when Achab demaunded of him his Vinyard for as much as it was worth, God forbid said the poore man that I should sel thee my Fathers Inheritaunce, being yet but a poore Vinyard: yet did hee defend it to the losse of his life. Wee may read in the olde Testament how greatly God him self fauoured the maintenãce and preseruatiõ of Inheritaunce & possession in their Tribes houses, names & families. For hee commaunded by Moyses

expresly

expressly that if any man solde his Inheritaunce beeing Land or house: it should return vnto him again in the yeere of Iubile which was euery fiftie yeeres. Also that Women vnto whõe Lands and Inheritaunce were devolute in default of heires males should not marry into any other Tribe. Wherfore (q hee) I wish you to haue a great regarde in departing from your Inheritaunce so great a blessing of God, for it is a great infamie & reproche to be said, an vnthrift and ỹ first decaier of a house & family whether it were greater or smaller.

Alas Sir (quoth this yung man) I am in greater distresse yee knowe these Merchaunts of London are harde dealers with whome there is no mercie but for ready paiment, wel quoth the Gentleman, I will do thus much for you, I my self wil lend you an hundred pound which you shall repay by fourtie pound a yeere, and that I suppose you may easely do ordering your self wisely, take that quoth hee & offer it to the Merchaũt if happily he may be intreated to giue you a yeer or twain for the rest vpon reasonable consideratiõ, ỹ yung man gaue him hartie thanks, ỹ money was fetched down, coũted & deliuered & ỹ assuraũce made accordingly, which beeing don: ỹ yungmã took his leaue & hartily desired me (although a meer straũger vnto him, (yet because I was present & a witnes of so great curtesie & humanitie) to go with him to London vnto this Merchants house, which I also was content to do, and hauing dispatched the occasion of my there beeing, and hauing likewise taken my leaue: to London wee came and to to the Merchants house wee went, when wee came before this Merchaunt the yung Gentleman began to intreat him as fair as hee could & telling him of this good & godly Lawyer and of his great compassion, his good councell and perswasion: desired him to accept this C. l. in part of payment, & to giue him a yeere or twaine for payment of the rest. This Merchant hauing heard all the matter: now GOD forbid (quoth he) that euer a Lawyer should heap coales vpon Merchants head, or that a Merchant should not be as willing and as ready to do a godly deed as a Lawyer, hauing receiued at the hands of God the like habilitie therto. And therewithall hauing receiued the C, l, he take his owne bond for the rest

to be paid by x.l. a yére, his first pay to begin after the Gentlemans C.l. ful paid, and delivered vnto him all his Indentures and other assurances of the Mortgage, and making vs great chére he let vs depart. Now when I would haue taken my leaue of this young Gentleman: I could by no meanes forbid him to bring me on my way hitherward, as farre as Ware xx. miles on this side London, where he paid all my charges for that night, and the nert day we toke leaue eche of other and departed either of vs toward his owne. Thus ye sée how frutefull was the good & gratious déed of one man, and how it prouoked the zeale of an other to dó the like.

AAAAAAA Amen (quoth Peirce.) Well quoth our Hoste, because you dó so hardly receiue my prófes: I will bring you more store of them, and such as I am ready to verifye against whom soeuer will deny their trueth.

Another tale of the Hoste of a vvoorshipfull Lawyer that made leases to all his Tenants of the Farmes they heeld for Li. yeeres, after a straunge sorte and also very vvisely. Chap. 17.

IT was (quoth he) in Buckingham Shire not very long sithence, at the house of rich Officer toward the Law whom I could name if néed required, who during the time of my béeing there, made vnto all his Tenants leases of their Farmes, wherof I my self am witnes, present at their Sealing and deliuerye. The leases are for li. yéres from the day of the date therof, the rent reserued as followeth. Yélding and paying vnto the said Leassor and his heires yérely during so many of the said li. yéres as thinheritaunce shall remaine in him or them, not solde, exchaunged, mortgaged, forfaited, leased in reuertion or otherwise estraunged v.l. currant money of England, and yéelding and paying from and immediatly after any such act done by him or them or any of them v. s yérly of like currant mony, and so after the rate of other rents were they greater or

smaller

ſmaller. Prouided allwayes, that the tenaunt ſhall not ſell, ſet nor let their ſaid Farme or any pertel therof, without the aſſent and licence of the ſaid Leaſſor or his heires, of which reſeruation I aſked him a reaſon, whereunto his anſwere was this. See (quoth he) how hard a matter it is for young Gentlemen vnto whō it falleth by the grace and gift of God to be Landlords and owners, wiſely to order & gouern either their poſſeſſions, lands and reuenues or them ſelues. I know alſo (quoth he) that in the wiſdome, prudency and good gouernment of ſuch: ſtandeth the happy and proſperous eſtate of a common welth, and her miſery in the contrary, and therfore in my iudgement ought all men generally to wiſh, yea and to endeuour that the greateſt lands and poſſeſſions may be in their hands who bothe can and will order and diſpoſe the ſame to the honor and glory of God, and to the profit of ỹ common welth, wherin me thinketh ſauing reformation, the to often and to common tranſlation of poſſeſſion, is not the leaſt matter nor laſt to be conſidered, as well for the cauſes therof which are euill: as alſo for the effects thereof which are wurſe. The cauſes that make men to ſell their patrimonyes and to ſpoile their inheritance, who knoweth not to be theſe, riot, game, whordome, delight in all vngodly pleaſures and paſtime of ſenſualitie, ſhortly the not fearing of God, nor ſeruing him, and the not caring to knowe his will and commandements, nor to liue therafter, theſe are the cauſes. The effects are theſe, firſt the ſpoyle of the land and the making it barren and bare of all the commodities therof, ſecondly the diſlodging and diſapointing of the honeſt Farmers and good houſe kæpers, for their ſakes that will bid more then they, without any other reſpect, and thoſe are commonly the wicked and vngodly, and from thence ariſeth infinit ſutes and controuerſies, maintenaunces, champerties and ſuch like.

This cauſeth lands often to chaunge their tenaunts and inhabitants, and by that meanes breacheth & diſſolueth one of the greateſt and ſureſt bonds of loue and frændſhip that is or euer was, namely, coeducation, converſation and acquaintaunce, which hatcheth, nouriſheth and confirmeth loue and

frendship, not only betweene men: but euen betweene the braute and vnreasonable beasts, who hauing beene fostered long togither in one place, will not only loue and defend one an other: but also euen the very place wherin they were bred and nourished, and they will very hardly be sundred or driuen there from. And this is the very law of kinde, which can not effectually worke among neighbours, of whom some are dayly or yearly flitting and giuing place vnto new, namely such as will bid more the which commonly are the worser sorte as hath beene already alleaged. These are two effects. The third is the sinceritie of Justice & also of discipline, bothe which it greatly hazardeth, namely for ỳ buyers and sellers are Correlatiues, and that the one cannot be without the other, and for that also the causes of selling & spoyling of patrimonies are such as I haue alredy declared. These things are right perillous in a common welth, and yet do almoste necessarily followe the to often and common translation of possession and inheritaunce, namely where it is by peny purchase, against the which neuertheless it is meruelous hard to forese and to prouide, I meane for heires and inheritors of Lordships, lands and possessions to continue in the same, beeing things that so many desire to haue, yea often times such as haue in their hands the bridle of libertie, or restraint of good and euill, and of the liues and manners of men, for what is there in all this earth so much desired as houses, landes, Lordships and possessions, and to commaund ouer people? What els is the end of all so many and so great trauels, watch, studie, so many and so great hazards by Sea & land, so many shifts, sleights, deceits and oppressions, of all which this worlde hath beene, is & euer wil be full, against all which who so will holde a thing of so great value: he must be well prouided and of great defence, and hath need to haue in him self the strength, wisdome, councell and iudgement of many, and so much the rather by how much his possession is ỳ greater, & that for two causes. First for that in his errour of life, fall and misgouernment: lyeth the fall, ruin and decay of a number, what of his owne blood, what of his tenaunts, faith-

full frends and seruants. Secondly for that his estate is subiect vnto many enemyes, of whom the greatest & most dangerous is the flatterer the olde enemye of all man kinde, as the story of our father Adam and mother Eue and the Serpent doth well declare. This moued Iuno as Ouid fableth to commit Io her Cow vnto Argus to kæp, which Argus had an hundred eyes in his head, and therfore much a doe had Mercury to deceiue him with all his swæt songs & Musick, for when he had brought one of his eyes a slæp, yea diuers of them, yet waked diuers others and stood vpon their ward, and whether his face or his back were toward Io: yet he all way behæld her.

A reason vvhy Copyholdes, Customes and Corporations vvere first ordayned, and howv that Pride & Flatterye are the cheefe causes that many a young Gentleman commeth to sell his Lands. Chap. 18.

AND surely in mine oppinion this moued the wise and honorable fathers and Magistrates of olde time to incorporat so great liuings and possessions, and also to erect and establish in Lordships so many coppy holdes and custommary tenures, as the most souereign remedy against pride and surcuydrie, which commonly accompanieth the priuate, singuler & sole proprietie, in lād, possession, office or any other thing whatsoeuer, & also a way and meane to furnish the common welth with many bothe able to deserue wel and to dw good also glad and willing therto, vnto the which pride is either the only let and impediment: or els of all other the greatest as he vpon whō flatterie attendeth, yea and in such sorte that he leadeth him by the nose vp and down the house, making him to belæue of him self any thing, causing him also to delight no while in any one thing, whether it be apparail or the fashion therof, place, person, dyet, frend, seruaunt, Tenaunt or other thing whatsoeuer, and this as dayly experi-

ence teacheth, is the high and ready way to the Vsurers house, and from thence to the Extorcioner, who dwelleth hard by, of which twain by that time he hath take forth his lesson kindely: I dare be his suretie he will not be hasty to doo good to any good body, neither if he would shall he haue wherwith all, for either shall he haue no lands left him at all: or if he haue any, he shall be glad to let thē dearer then ỹ any honest man shall doo good thereon, so that in conclusion, bothe the Landlord and the Tenaunt shalbe miserable.

The cause hereof is Pride moste and cheefly, as I haue said, and often times youth, good nature, or peraduenture excesse of Pleasure and Sensuall delights, where through young Gentlemen are often snared through euill company, beeing ouertaken sometime by giuing their word, sometime through bribe of a little present mony, sometime by one deceit, sometime by an other, wherin men are soone pampred, namely such as are of small experience and iudgement, and knowe not the false lures of the wicked and vngodly, against all which these Corporations and customes are of great force and a great defence, for in bothe these cases: hardly can they be assaulted, much lesse inuaded by any of the enemies aforesaid.

First for that a corporation is neuer vnder age, as for example, Maior and Comminaltie, Deane and Chapter, Wardens and Fellowes and such like, whose succession is by election, their propriette is ioint and in common, neither can one doe any thing without the rest, and therfore to flatter any one of them vaine, and to flatter them all very hard, namely mens Natures, Wit, Iudgements and Affections beeing diuers, and euery man willing to maintaine and prefer his owne oppinion or his frends. Pride atteinteth them not, for who is proud, or at the least so proud of any thing, wherein a number hath to commaund as much as he, and without whō he can doo nothing, then beeing armed against Pride the Father of necessitie and need: they are better free ly to afforde their good word or deed, and therfore in vayne were it to bribe them.

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But admit that any of them would be bribed, it were also in vain and would procure the euel wil of all the rest without bribing them all which were heauie and harde to dō.

So that in any competition made vnto such persons against any olde Frēend, Tenaunt, Officer or seruaunt: it is verie harde to preuaile except it be through his owne great misbehauiour. And where it is betwēn mēre Straungers one of them against an other, there the best and moste worthie is sure to spēed, for certainly and infallibly there is nothing in all this world so amiable, so beloued and fauoured as honestie, vertue and godlynes are. Where priuate flatterie or briberie stand not in their light, as in the case of priuate Owners and proprietaries: I haue alleadged that it both may and often doth. And thus much of the Corporatiōs & of their effects. Now to speake of ỳ customes of Manours the very sāe or like in effect may be said, for ỳ Inheritour of customary Land although hee be sealed therof to him and to his heires: yet can hee not sel it without licence of the Lord and that solemnly graunted by his Steward in open Court and there entred, nay hee cannot set or let the same or otherwise impaire the wood or other commodities therof without the licence aforelaid.

So great an entrelle and commaundement hath ỳ Lord, therin and yet not to the hinderaunce or preiudice of ỳ Inheritaunce but e contra, namely that the selling, setting or other gouernment of such a royall possessiō as land is: should stand in ỳ Iudgemēt & discretiō of diuers, & those of ỳ ripest & best aduised, and not to be solde, wasted or spoiled through the intemperaunce of one foolish or vngodly man or woman either for nēed or necessitie or otherwise for flatery or other fōd or foolish affection what soeuer, wherin the Lord and his lerned Stuard and the homagers of the Court are Iudges.

In all which cases it may euidently appēer how great a care those honourable and reuerend Forefathers had to enact and establish the greatest possessions in the hands of such as were not like to misregarde so great and high a blessing of GOD, the effects and frutes wherof haue bēn many and great as from time to time proof hath verified and yet doth, for it hath

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alwaies bẽn accoũted & yet is a right happy thing to be tenaũt or Farmer to a corporation or enioy any commoditie vnder them. For worshipful & honorable haue alwaies bẽn their dealing in ordering and gouernment of their Lands, liuings and possessions, and of their Tenaunts and Farmers of the same. But chẽfly and aboue all others to be Tenaunt vnto the Prince, who indeed is a Corporation, for from the Prince there can passe nothing but by writing vnder seale, neither doth or can wout the consent of diuers of the moste honorable and best aduised. These (quoth hẽ) are the causes and the reasons that haue moued mẽ to make these leasses, and therin these reseruations which vnto you dw sẽme so very straunge. For I suppose this to be a strong meane to vnite the Landlord and his tenaunt togither, and to counterballaunce the one of them against the other in fourme of a corporation, orels as nẽr vnto the Nature therof as I could deuise. For by this meanes, if my heires or any of thẽ chaũce at any time hẽrafter to proue vnthriftie: his vnthriftines shall not be so gainful vnto any man þ in hope to purchase his lands would therfore strengthen his hands therein and by these meanes I haue left them mo Frends and fewer Flaterers. For hẽ that shall by his Lands without the consent of the Farmer: hẽ shall for the time make as good a purchase as doth hẽ that purchaseth of a Woman her Husbãds lands while hẽ is yet aliue, or as hẽ that goeth to the Poultrie and buying there a Capon for two shillings putteth him into his bag, and when he commeth home he findeth there nothing but a Capons leg, for in this case of mine: the buyer buyeth lesse then the Seller selleth by vi. parts, which me think should kẽp them from agrẽment vpon the price whilest either of them would fain make the best bargain for him self, as the maner of all chapmen is. And for which reason Iesus Sirach saith of them, that sinne sticketh betwẽne the bier & the seller as fast as doth a naile stick betwẽn two stones in a wall.

This way haue I thought to be stronger and better assured then any entaile generall or speciall, bothe which priuat couetise hath found a way to destroy to the disherison of ma-

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ny a good kindred and to the great decay of vertue and godlynes, and herin (quoth hee) I haue don my heires no wrong, for vpon this rent I haue liued content & do, & if they proue honest and vertuous: so may they do, and then I haue left them inough, and if they proue otherwise: then haue I left to much and yet to little to serue them also.

Moreouer (quoth hee) I haue herby prouided against the malice of such tenaunts as abuse the liberalitie of good Landlords setting and letting ouer vnto the third and fourth hand racking and enhaunsing the things vnto excessiue and vnreasonable, rents and such as the Landlord him self would neuer haue don for pure shame and pittie, which neuertheless being rayled to his hand by others: is a perrillous president vnto him at his return vnto the possession therof.

Thus you haue heard (quoth our Hoast) what a godly and Fatherly care this good and vertuous Magistrate had to preferre the hononur and glory of God and also the common welth of his Cuntrie and People, whereby it may appeare how hartilye to be desired is the purchase of such Personnes whose riches is the Treasurie and Storehouse of the common welth, aswel for the sustenaunce of the same concerning worldly and bodily prouision of transitorie things: as also for the furtheraunce and increase of Vertue, Godlynes and Pietie, Loue and Concorde.

Hoe (quoth Pierce) lay a strawe there for Gods sake, marry Sir heer is stuffe indeed (quoth hee) heer hath been a long discourse indeed, and euen as true as all the rest, with that I enterrupted their talke and spake vnto him.

The Author interrupteth Pierce, maintaining Simons Assercion, shewing that of late in his sight he knewe a Lawyer gaue x.li. to the building of a Bridge.

Chap. 19.

FAther Pierce (quoth I) these matters are not so straũge nor so incredible as you wæne, for proof wherof I wil (if it please you to giue me leaue) reherse a thing which I my self did sée and that no longer a go then Easter Tearme last. It fortuned that I went into a Lawyers Chamber in Sergeants Inne with a Frend of mine who was Plaintiffe in a Repleuin in Bedfordshire, & bæing come into this Lawyers Chamber and hauing staied there awhile about our busines: there came in an ancient Gentleman of the Cuntrie, whome I know very wel by sight and haue don long, whõe when the Maister had espied comming vp euen at the top of the staires: hée spake to him as followeth. I knowe wherfore you come, go down again to my man and bid him come vp to mée, which the Gentleman did, his Seruant bæing come: hée took forth of his Cubbord (which was vnder the square table that stood before him) a bagge wherin was ten pound and deliuering it vnto his man bad him go down and pay it vnto the Gentleman, and if any of the golde lack weight chaunge it for him. The seruant went down and did accordingly, I thought verily it had bæn the rent of some house or land that he had holden of him. But euen while I was in this thought: the Gentleman comming vp again gaue him humble & hartie thanks and that in the name and behalfe of a whole Cuntrie yea of diuers Shires. Whereupon I takeing occasion to enquire farther of the matter: vnderstood that he gaue that ten pound frælý towards the erecting & building of a bridge, and that such charitable dæds as this are no new things vnto him. I soner wil beléeue this (quoth Pierce) bæing of a man learned in the lawes and whome Vertue and Learning haue preferred, then of the others that fisshen for Offices wõ the golden hook and neuer wist what learning ment.

Simons return to his matter again declareth of an other rich Officer in the Lavv vvho had tvvo Farmers, one rich and the other poore and hovv hee delt vvith them.

Chap. 20.

With that our Hoast tok holde again, saying ꝑ hée had yet one other matter to tel, and therwith hée would conclude. I was another time (quoth hée) at the house of an other rich Officer toward the Law, who dwelleth in Kent also and is a man of great welth, and one time of my béeing at his house as (I thank him) I haue béen very many times. There were two of his Tenaunts come to take new leases of their Farmes the lands béeing of equall rent & value, but yet the Farmers not equall in welth: the one hauing béen blessed (as it should séeme) abowe ꝑ other, for the one of them was very welthie and vpheld his Tenament in very good repair & offered the Lord at the first word fortie pound for a fine for one and twentie yéeres. The other was poore and yet his Tenament in decay, neither was hée able to giue fiue pounds for a fine, wherof the Landlord hauing challenged him and warning him to loke to it thereafter: willed the other to lay down his fourtie pounds, which hée did without delay. The Gentlman when hée had counted it: put it into a bagge and frélye gaue it vnto the poor man, with these words, (One of you beare an others burdē) wher with the other was so farre from béeing all content, that hée humblie praised God, and gaue the Gentleman right hartie thanks therfore: and so hée sent them away bothe very well contented. Since which time I heare of the poor man that hée is growen to great welth and of such benignitie and hospitalitie as are not many Owners or Landlords dwelling néer him. Thus (quoth our Hoast) I haue confirmed my first Assertion and haue sufficiently auoided your reasons and examples alleadged in disproof of the same, and these haue I don by Example and demonstrations bothe moe in number then yours are: and also more euident, apt and proper vnto ꝑ purpose. That is not so Neighbour (quoth Pierce) for admitting that your Examples were all or any of them true, which for the moste parte I wil not graunt, yet are they perticuler and cannot make any generall Coueluſion, besides ꝑ you tender mée an issue vpon two affirmatiues which is against the grounds of law as I haue learned by mine owne

experience déerly bought. For I haue alleadged against you the generall Corruption of liues and manners béeing the effect of libertie vnto excesse and dissolution which I also haue alleadged & prooued to be an effect of priuate desire to pouch, to purchase and to wax rich, from all which causes & effects conuertly my Argument is nescessary and infallible & therfore béeing alleadged affirmatiuely it demaundeth a direct & generall trauerse to the effects, which effects béeing not disprooued: ỹ causes therof cannot be denyed, against all which matters you haue answered in the affirmatiue also, alleadging the examples of some good men, which whether they be true or not, I do not greatly force without a generall denyal of that which I haue alleadged, although that for euery example alleadged you had brought fiftéen, and so is my first Assertion maintained and standeth fast, and yours vtterly disprooued.

❧ *The Conclusion of the Conference, and the preparation to the Questions beeing the second Book.*

Chap. 21.

BY this time it was waxen euen dark night & our Hoast speaking vnto Pierce said vnto him Neighbour Pierce (quoth hée) wée haue reasoned so very long to and fro that the night is stolen vpon vs, and the purpose of your coming hither vtterly forgotten through our earnest disputation in these matters.

Truely Neighbour (q Pierce) I cannot think this time ill spent, I would I had neuer spent time worse if it had pleased God, and therfore quoth he, if it please you to lend me this v.l. I will be gon home, for I knowe the way at midnight. Neighbour Pierce (quoth our Hoste) your v.l. is ready, and ye shall haue it with you but not to night, for hence shall ye not depart before to morowe God willing, and namely for this straungers sake, whom I wil desire you to accompany for this night, for in his countrye I haue receiued ma-

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ny folde humanitie, as partly ye haue heard, and therfore I gladly would doo him some heere to my power, and therefore this night or a conuenient part therof we will indeuour our selues to spend togither in honest mirth and exersises. And therwithall I spake, and giuing our Hoste harty thanks: desired Pierce that it might so be. Who at my request did soone condiscend, and was very well contented therwithall.

Then quoth I, seeing that we haue so well spent the fore part of the night wherin I my self haue don nothing but harkened: let vs agree vpon some meane to passe the time with all after supper vntill bed time, no wurse then we haue don the time before.

Now verely Gentleman (quoth our Hoste) and that is very well spoken, I beshrewe him that dilagreeth therunto, if it be my self. Amen quoth Pierce Plowman if it be I. Very well then quoth I, this is my order if it may please you. After Supper enery man shall put his question and tel his tale in order, & by course wherunto eche of the others shall speak to wit vnto the question shall giue an aunswere of dissolutiõ of the saying and vnto the tale shall shew their good or il liking, and hee that telleth the best and wisest tale to wit of highest and best sentence and putteth the sharpest and wisest question moste tending to vertue and edyfying of the hearers or giues the wisest and best solution: hee shall haue his breakfast heer to morrow at the charges of the other twain. Content with all my hart quoth our Hoast. Content quoth Pierce Plowman. But to whose Judgemẽt shall wee stand herin q hee? Truely q I, euen to the doome of our Hostesse if it please her to take it vpon her, whervpon shee beeing called very willingly vndertook it, so was the matter fully agreed and our hands giuen theruppon. And then was the table couered for supper & (our Hoast hauing him self first giuen thãks to God) to supper wee went where wee fared right wel & were mery, and when wee had supped: the Cloth beeing remoued, and thanks likewise giuen. After wee had sitten stil and reposed our selues a little while: I my self began as followeth.

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The end of the first Book.

THE SECOND BOOK, DECLARING THE Questions and Answers between the Author, the Hoste and Pierce Plowman.

THe first Question put by me, whether it be more proper to vertue and godlines to giue or to lend, or to pay that a man oweth.

Pierce Plowman answered, that of those three to giue was the best, to lend was the next, & as for paying that which a man oweth: he held it a dutie, & in doing of dutie there stādeth no Godlines, neither lyeth there any thank therin, & that (he sayd) appeareth by Christe his owne words who sayeth, that when we haue don that which was our dutie: we are vnprofitable seruants, neither hath paying of debts any expresse testimony of Godlines or vertue in the Scriptures of God, or by common experience among men, wheras giuing hath a name of vertue, namely of liberalitie wherof the Prophet Dauid speaketh thus. He hath dispersed and giuen vnto the poore, and his righteousnes remaineth for euer. Again of lending he saith. The righteous is mercifull and lendeth, & will guide his words with discretion. To be short, liberalitie (which extendeth bothe vnto giuing & also lending) is a portie of God, who bothe giueth & lendeth vnto vs his dayly gifts & blessings, but borowe he cannot neither pay his debt. And so shortly paying of debt in his opinion no vertue ne portie of Godlines, for that it is a thing which God him self cannot do, and so the first twaine, vertues, and the third no vertue, but a duty.

Mr Hoste maintained the contrary, & that to pay a mans debt is the moste excellent qualitie & vertue of the three, and moste peculier and proper vnto the children of God, and that the other twaine are no vertues, neither deserue that name, saue so far forth as they are included within this, and for prowfe therof thus he reasoneth. What soeuer is or may be cause of euill: that same thing may it self be said to be euill. What soeuer act corrupteth or dishonesteth the doer or the sufferer therof, or els bothe: that act is or may be euil, contrarywise, what soeuer act doth not neither cannot corrupt

or

or dishonest the doer nor the sufferer therof nor any other person: that act saith he neither is euill, neither by any means can be made or called euil. Lending saith he, oft times corrupteth and dishonesteth the doer therof, namely for Vsurye, selling the deerer for day giuen, bothe these are lendings in their kindes, and yet not any properties of Godlines nor vertue. But to speak of the best lending and that which is simply wout any of the regards aforesaid, yet meaneth the lender to haue his things againe, and therfore what godlines is there saith Christe if you bid them to dinner ý can bid you againe, what great godlines haue you shewed therin, and so much of lending. Gifts are giuen oft times to corrupt and to pervert Justice, and therby bothe the doer and sufferer dishonested. Gifts are giuen by the couetous in hope to receiue greater. Gifts are giuen by flatterers and clawbacks, namely superfluous and excessiue feasts and banquets vnto Princes and great estates, to the end vnder their authoritie to ride vpon the poore and godly people, and to deuoure and spoyle the labours of all others of the common and meaner sorte, to the great oppression of vertue and godlines, and to the great increse of all wickednes and vngodlines. Gifts are giuen in simulation of frendship when nothing is so little ment, and so wickednes vtterly concluded therby. In giuing is ostentation and vaine glory, and these two are the fathers & mother of flattery. For where Thraso is Gnatho wil be also, giuing vnto one frend and not vnto the rest, if a man haue many: procureth their hatred and enuye against bothe the giuer & the receiuer. Shortly it standeth togither to be a large giuer: and yet a moste wicked and vngodly person, and thereof are great examples namely of Cateline, of whom Salust writeth that he was prodigall of his owne, & desirous of other mens. And of Silla that cruell Tirant he reporteth this, he would giue no man more frankly, lend he would also very liberally, but what soeuer he could borowe: he would neuer pay againe. Now vnto the third part, to wit paying a mans debt, and which (saith he) I call the moste high and soueraign vertue, and the moste proper vnto Godlines, and that for these

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cauſes. Firſt it neither corrupteth nor diſhoneſteth the dwer nor the ſufferer therof, for I am ſure all mē will confeſſe that a man may honeſtly pay that which he oweth, and he vnto whom he ought it, may honeſtly craue the ſame.

paying of det corrupteth no Juſtice neither I ſuppoſe can be proued euer to haue don in paying of det there is no oſtentation of vain glory, for it is not the dæd of a proude minde, whoſe propertie is not to acknowledg any good turn for that might charge him with dutie of acquitail wheron the proud and vngodly differ chæfly from vertuous and godly, for the proud may not ſeeme to haue néded any mans good turn neither to haue vſed their help, bothe which things in paying their det they ſhould implicatiuely confeſſe to haue don, and therfore are they aſhamed to repay what ſo they can borrow, for the Concluſion aforeſaid. And that ſtandeth wel with the ſaying of Ieſus of Sirack who ſaith that what ſo the vngodly can borrowe: hé accounteth it as if hé had found it, wherof the reaſon is this, although pure néd and neſceſſitie cōſtarin them oft to vſe this word (lend) yet they vſe him for a cloke of diſſimulation as the effect ſheweth, for this is euident that there are but foure waies of attaīment or getting of whatſoeuer thing, for it is either giuen vs, lent vs, orels wé take it perforce, orels wé found it.

So that whatſoeuer is lent vnto ſuch people either it is giuen or lent, or taken by force orels found.

Giuen you wil ſay it is not, nor ſo ment by you, and you ſhall finde the ſame by him that took it at your hands, for hé wil neuer giue you thanks therfore, neither ſée you but againſt his hart.

Borrowed it was not vpon his behalf, and conſequently not vpon yours, howſoeuer you ment in departing therwith for except there be a borrower: there can be no lender, for they are corelatiue and none can be without other, no more then there can be a Father without a Childe, then if the one did not borrow: the other did not lend, hé borrowed not, for you ſhall finde that with his good will hé neuer ment to pay it again, Ergo you lent it not.

Hé took not from you perforce for your ſelf deliuered it,

ſo

so then if you neither gaue it, lent it, neither left by force, then there remaineth but a fourth, which is that you lost it and hée hath found it, according to the saying of Iesus of Sirack, for what soeuer a man findeth hée took it from no man neither is he bound to thank any man therfore, and that this is the manner of the vngodly: the Prophet Dauid beareth witnesse where he saith. The vngodly boroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous is merciful and liberall. Thus it appereth (quoth our Hoast) that who so truely paieth his det: hée can not therin be called an euil person or be said to haue corrupted or dishonested neither him self or any other bodie, and therin farre excelleth this quallitie bothe the other.

¶ But now it resteth mée to proue (quoth hée) that this word (to pay a mans det) doth include bothe the rest so farre forth as they may or can be called vertues or properties of godlynes which I wil proue in this order.

¶ First I say, that whatsoeuer wée haue héer in this world: we haue it at the bountiful & mercifull hands of our God, as lent and which hée may at his pleasure take from vs, as also wée dayly sée him do. Then if wée haue nothing but that we haue receiued: (as Saint Paule saith) wée must néeds confes wée are indetted vnto him therfore. How then can we pay vnto him our det for he receiueth no money? we cãnot feast him, for hée neither eateth Buls flesh nor drinketh the blod of Gotes. It resteth then that wée giue vnto them that are héer his Bayliffes and Receiuours for that intent and purpose, and vnto them in whose persones hée hath figured him self vnto vs to wit vnto his poore and godly Saints and seruaunts that are héere vpon Earth among vs, vnto whome whatsoeuer wée giue hée hath promised to accept it, as giuen vnto him as a payment of so much det, a testimonie not of our merit: but of our working faith in his grace and mercie, and in this only sence and meaning, giuing and lending are vertues and proper vnto the Children of God.

2. THe next Question put by our Hoast, was whether is the harder matter to make a Lord or a Gentleman. Pierce answered, ỳ in all cõmon reason & also by experience

the harder thing: the harder is the doing therof, a Lord (q hée) is greater degrée then a Gentleman, and therfore harder to be made then a Gentleman.

I answered that I thought and knew the contrary by experience, for I know (quoth I) where a Churle by his purchase of a Mannour is become Lorde of a number better men then him self, and so is hée a Lord and yet no Gentleman.

3. THe next Question of Pierce Plowman was why poore men are not called to office of estate & gouernment in common welths but euermore the rich and welthy.

MAr Hoast answered, because quoth hée, the poore would be rich and so are not content with their present estate, but desire alteration and chaunge and all such persones are more mèt to be cõmaunded then to commaund in a common welth. But of the rich and welthie it is clean otherwise, for they are alredy that which the poore haue desire to be, and therfore content, and consequently Frends and furtherers of peace and vnitie which is neuer nor neuer wil be where they haue authoritie in their hands that are not content wt their owne present state, & so great hazard of the common peace lyeth therin.

4. THe next Question by mée what is the reason that the Sonnes and Children of great purchasers, namely Lawyers and Merchants, are commonly such horrible and shameles vnthrifts.

PIerce answered that hée knew no reason therin but hée thought it a very secret Iudgement of God vpon the parents that haue eaten soure Grapes and set their Childrens téeth an edge.

MAr Hoast said it argued great equitie and consience in their Children in that they ment to buy wit, and to pay as déer therfore as their fathers and frends had solde theirs.

5. THe next questiõ by our Hoast, what was first ỳ reason of giuing and wearing of mourning gownes & garments for such as are diseassed.

Pierce

Pierce answered hée thought it was in fauor of our imbicilitle and weaknes, and for that reason: are not so prone and redy to wéep so sore, namely rich widowes who cannot wéep so redily as a dog can make water, and therfore it was thought expedient that such mourning were, and that such as could not mourne for other busines: there might be allowed vnto them some honest and coullorable meanes to mourn by attourney, as wee se ẏ in matters of law, he that for other nescessary busines cannot attend vpon his causes: is receiued by his Attourney, and of these great heires, executors and rich widdowes that are otherwise necessarily occupied and haue no leisure to wéep: it was thought in like maner. Also it was thought profitable for the parties them selues for that it is an honest mean of publicatiõ aswel of the widowhed as also of her great heuines, therfore wherby the more Counselers may resorte vnto her, for in straunge place a widowe is knowen from other by her mourning and sorow.

6. The next Question by Peirce what differeth a couetous person from a Niggard. ¶ Our Hoast answered a niggard is affraid to want him self, and therfore husbandeth and spareth, and oft liueth besides his owne. But the couetous is wurse affraid least others should not want and therfore kéepeth and engrosseth all to defraude the hungrie soule, and to make the poore want bread.

7. The next Question by me why such folke as delight in rich and costly apparel, and also in delicat and daintie meats and drinks, do not eat and drink in ẏ open streats as they do weare their apparel. ¶ Pierce answered, because that for their delicat fare: no body would honor or reuerẽce them except they gaue them part with them, which because they purpose not to doo: therfore they holde it best to eat it wẏin doores and in seceret, but in their braue apparel there lieth some honor at the least as they suppose, because they se many ẏ méet them strike their sailes therat although as great and the like reason in the one as in the other.

8. The next Question by our Hoast why the best and daintiest meats & drinks and such as bréed and make the moste & best nurishment in the body, doo not also bréed the best maner but rather the contrary.

I Answered, because that commonly folke take to much of them, and haue so great felicitie therin, the rather that the ministers of voluptuousnes and sensualitie may thriue, but the chéefest and best reason séemeth to be this, that men may knowe that Godlines and vertue are not tied vnto meat and drink, neither dw consist therin as, Christe hath said. The kingdome of heauen is neither meat nor drink, & to moue vs therfore to eat and drink to liue, and not to liue to eat and drink.

9 THe next Question by me, what possession is the best and surest, and least subiect vnto rauin and violence.

OVr Hoste answered, the best things & the wurst for vertue which is the best possession, a man may cary farre enough without béeing robbed therof, and or that either man or woman offer to take it from him, and as it is of the best: so is it of the wurst, for once (quoth he) I lost a Gloue which was taken vp and brought after me.

10 THe next Question by our Hoste, whether beautie & honestie may dwell togither in one house, and be tenaunts bothe vnto one Landlord or not.

PIerce said, he knew no cause to the contrary, except the Landlord (quoth he) be a Purchaser of Land, or a great builder or bothe, then Beautie must haue a Licence of the Iustice to kéep a Seller or a Bowling alley or an inordinary table or els all thrée, and then honestie must take a house farther of.

11 THe next question by Peirce, what is the reason that some Women dw so curle and lay forth their heres.

THe answere by our Hoste, for that to be beardlesse is in a man monstrous, and to be bauld headed in a woman as in a trée neuer to haue leaues, or ground grasse, and therfore lest for want of shewing their heres they might peraduenture be suspected to be monsters: they make them selues very monsters in déed.

Dum vitant stulti vicua in contrarium currunt.

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12 THe next Question by our Host, what is the end and purpose of so stately and sumpteous buildings of houses and so many Chimneyes therin now a dayes.

THe answere by Pierce philick and naturall, that against all sicknesses, namely Ethicks and Ptisicks, all things delighting the senses are holsome, & also all things prouoking and causing appetite. These delight the sēses, namely the eyes, these sharpen the appetite, for they argue hunger & scarsitie within, neither is the smell of meat or drink hurtfull to weak stomacks, the Kitchin and the Buttrye bēing not so apparant, and euen at the first entrye as in olde buildings, but rather farre of, and hard to finde, and with some labour and exercise except to him that knoweth which way they are. His reason œconomicall politik, that it is a good defence against the haunt of Beggers, for there is no Begger that hath either experience or wit that will goe thither for an almes, and so, mony and charges saued therby.

13 THe next Question by me, wherin differed flatterers from Crowes and Rauens.

PIerce answered, they differ in this, that Crowes and Rauens will pick out a mans eyes when he is dead, but flatterers will eat him while he is yet aliue.

14 THe next Question by our Hoste, wherin haue the rich of this world aduauntage & prerogatiue aboue the pore.

MY answere was, that their prerogatiues are great and many, but chéefly these that in the rich: vices get credit and estimation due to vertue, as for the purpose in them robbery and extortion is purchase, and lechery is solace, and so of the rest as it pleaseth their flatterers to magnify thē in their folyes, and contrarywise in the pore: vertues are slaundered, simplicitie and playne dealing are holden foolishnes, because they do not aduaunce.

15 THe next Question by Pierce, what disease is moste dangerous and hard to be cured.

I answered Pride, and a feuer Ethick in the third degrée, for neither of those admitteth either cure or councell.

16 THe next Question by me, wherfore the Wise man bad his sonne beware of welth, and said not so vnto him of pouertie.

OVr Hoste answered, for that welth is a flatterer, and bedoteth man and woman, neither can he shewe them their frends, but ponerty doth, and like as foule wether warneth a fole to take his Cloke: so doth faire wether warne a wise man to do the same.

17 THe next question by our Hoste, who are they whose cost and labour deserue best thanks.

THeirs (quoth Pierce) who the more they build the worse others are lodged, and the harder they fare and power do liue, of these aske & enquire & ye shall finde but to many.

18 THe next question by me, what the Poets did meane by the story of Diomedes, of whō they reported ý he had horses whom he fed with mens flesh, and that lastly by Hercules he was giuen to be eaten of his owne horses.

OVr Hoste said, that by that tale as he thought, they meāt the same or like that they meant by Acteon & his hounds, to wit that to delight in excesse of vain pleasures & pastimes, as in riding in Chariots or vpō great horses or in such stately maner to delight in hunting: requireth excessiue charges & expences, wherby they are forced to deale hardly with all ý haue to do with them, with their horses and hounds to deuoure bothe others & them selues also at length, also ý ouer much delight in such vanities: prophaneth the minde of man or woman, & maketh them to wax barbarous & void of all cō tēplation, for els why should they imagin a pair of Harts hornes to set vpō a mans hed but for his wilde & beastly minde.

19 THe next question by Pierce, what vice hath don God the moste and best seruice of late yeres.

OVr Hoste answered Pride, for he hath bēn a punisher of

all

all other vices, for what peculiall statute hath not he preferred and begged for the gaine therof, and whom hath he not inuaded therwith, and all to maintaine the filthie pride and excesse of a fewe.

10 THe next question by Pierce, what vertue hath of late yeres done moste harm vnto men, & moste dishonor vnto God.

THat hath liberalitie (quoth our Hoste,) namely theirs who vse to please others and yet depart from nothing thē selues but all at other folkes charges, which hath bene very common of late yeres, bidding them spye out. &c. This setteth mē one in an others top, and bringeth so much brabble, sute & quarrell, this hath begotten vs so many reteiners, flatterers, promoters, maintainers, vnconcelers & Sicophants, ỹ hardly can any man account him self assured in any thing that he possesseth be it land, farme, lease or other commodity what soeuer, that he shall not haue his title scanned & searched to the quick. This hath caused the Merchants trade & his gain to be enquired vpon also, yea the very poore Artificer to be so sifted: that hardly can he liue by his trade, to the great offence of God and trouble of the common welth.

¶ Heer end our questions & solucions, & follow our tales.

OVr Hoste began his tale as followeth. It fortuned quoth he, within this twelue moneths last within fiue miles of this place, there fell a brabble betweene two rich men concerning trespasses by wordes & speaches, wherupon one of them sued the other & had demanded by action M.l. damages. I can not tell how, at length they were bothe content to put ỹ matter vnto two men of worship their neighbours, and became bound in great sōmes either to other to stand to their award & order therin. The plaintif for their better instructiō: deliuered vnto tharbitrators a copy of his declaration & of ỹ whole issue, wherin ỹ partie Defendant to some of the matter had pleaded not giltie: & other some had iustified, wherupon tharbitrators hauing duely considered, and heard their allegations: for further proof of bothe their matters, ordered as followeth, that the partie defendant being guiltie of diuers misbehauiours by the Plaintife agaynst him alleadged: should

therfore

therfore pay two hundred fiftie pound vnto the common tresure of fiue Parishes next adioining, to be there imploied and bestowed at the discretion of the moste honest and best of the said Parishes & vnto ỹ partie plaintif for all his costs ỹ d, this awarde bæing shewed and red vnto the parties they weare bothe highly displeased therat.

The plaintif for that the Arbitrators had giuen that vnto Straungers (saith hée) which should haue bæn his and so haue exceæded the limmits of their autority and the tenour of his submission. The defendant thought him greæued with the greatnes of the sum & so bothe the parties highly displeased.

The Arbitrators maintained there awarde and order to be bothe iust and reasonable. First for the Defendaunt, they said they were of dutie bound to punish him vpon good & due proofs made by his Aduersarie of his il and vngodly behaulour, wher neuertheless they had qualified his punishment and the demaund of his Aduersary. As touching the plaintif and the sum which hée demaũded by the name and tearm of amends: their answere was that they ment it such to wit an amends and that not only vnto one of them but to them bothe for they hoped that the Defendaunt by that time hée hath paied the two hundred & fiftie pounds wil be better hérafter as concerning the like offence and so hée hath his amends, but what or how you would haue bæn amended by the receit of so much money paid vnto you: if it might haue appeared vnto vs wée verely would haue adiudged it vnto you, but ỹ could wée neuer perceiue nor be perswaded to belæue, for we neuer heard that honor, vertue, godlines and the existimatiõ therin are or euer were valued or valuable by money taking, but rather in departing therefrom, for as the last doth shew a noble, gentle and a godly hart and minde: so doth the first argue the moste vile abiect and baleſt minded person that euer can be & one in whome is vtterly misprision of all vertue as wel witnesseth S. Peeter vnto Simon Magus, wherfore (sayd they) we thought that in this distributiõ which we meã to be your act: you haue vnto the world sufficiently disproued whatsoeuer euil your Aduersarie hath purposed to bring vpõ you as touching your existimation or good name and haue

shewed

shewed your self in very déd such a man as in the preamble of your declaration you gladly would be taken to be, and such as if you be not alredy: wée verily think that the receit of all this and ten times as much more wil neuer make you, and therfore can be called no mends vnto you in the taking: but rather in the honest distributing therof, which we holde a iust and reasonable Iudgement in all actions of such nature.

¶ With that the two parties drew forth either others obligation & cancelled them bothe, and took hands and departed home great Frends spite of the Arbitrators and of their awarde, and so ỹ. Churles were made frends.

THis tale béeing ended, Pierce Plowman would néeds acquite with an other tale not vnlike. It chaunced one day (quoth he) while I was in my Councellers Chamber in the inner Temple: there came a woman dwelling about the Strand, and prayed his councell, and what action she might bring against an other woman a neighbour of hers, that had said to her in open presence of diuers of her neighbours, that she had alredy twise escaped the Gallowes. My Lawier asked of her if she had neuer in her life passed by a pair of Gallowes. She answered yes. So haue I doon (quoth he) I thank my God, and that sometime when there haue bẽn a dozen hanged, and so I think haue you (quoth he). True it is Sir quoth she. Then quoth he, ye cannot recouer for those words, for they beare good couller of iustification, and also shew that ye haue had better fortune then possible many a better mans childe, and so haue I my self also. With this answere ỹ good womã held her self wel apaid, & went her way cõtent.

THen began my tale. There is dwelling in Holbourne (quoth I) and that not very farre from the place where I do lye, a certain man whome I haue noted this long time to be a man of a straunge affection, for bẽing a man of great welth and therfore the méeter for company, yet if any frend or neighbour require him to goe with them to the Tauern, to the Ale house, to the Theater, to ỹ Courtain as they term it, or to Paris garden or any such place of expence: he vtterly refuseth, & after their return that willed his company: his

maner is to go vnto some one of them, desiring him to tel him truely what hée hath spent since his going forth, which hauing learned at him whether it be a grote or sixpence, more or lesse, hée goeth strait vnto a Coffer that hée hath standing secretly in his Chamber, which hath a Til, in the which Til there is a little clift, at the which clift hée putteth in almuch mony as the partie said ỹ had spent, and this til, hée neuer openeth vntil the end of the yéer, so that often times he findeth therin fortie shillings, oft times three or foure pound or more, & this hée taketh and bestoweth vpon his poor Neighbours, and vpon other godly busines imployeth it.

And vpon the lid of his Chest is written in great Romain letters, take from thy kinde, and giue to the blinde.

This tale béeing ended, the night some what far run: our Hostesse warned vs therof and that it was high time to go to bed, which wée were all contented to do sauing Pierce Plowman, who had yet one other tale to tel, and prayed vs to giue him the hearing, which wée graunted him, and then hée began.

¶ There is héer about (quoth Pierce) a Gentleman that hath enlarged his rent but not his land (where in many are very expert at this day) once vpon a time of my being in his house there came in a poore tenaunt of his, one that had béen long tenaunt bothe to his father and others his Auncestors, which poore man pittifully said vnto him as followeth.

Alas Sir (quoth hée) in your Fathers and Graũdfather? dayes I liued wel and kept at the least twentie Kine besides Oxen and horses, and now through your hard dealing with mée, I am not able to kéep twain.

Wel quoth the Gentleman thou liest, for I haue béen better to thée then euer my Father or Graundfather was, for where by thine owne confession in their time thou diddst kéep but twentie Kine: now thou maist kéep two hundred at the least, for now (quoth hée) through my frendship thou maist be the common Neat heard, and kéep all the beasts in the Town.

And thus our tales béeing all ended: wé required the sentence of our Hostesse therin, shée said that truely in her opinion

nion the Straunger (meaning mée) had tolde the best tale, and whereby shée had gotten moste Example of edification and knowledge, whereby to help and instruct bothe her self and others, and giuing mée great and hartie thanks therfore: shée gaue Iudgement that I should break my fast the next day at the charges of her Husband and Pierce Plowman, shée said farther that to that man of whome I tould: the tale shée was better, if shée knew him to do him good.

¶ So heer wée ended, and went to bed, and the next day Pierce Plowman was vp very earely, and called mée vp and our Hoast, (as sithens I haue learned his maner is alwaies to do) gathered vs all togither with the residue of his householde, meiny, Children and Seruants.

And hée him self red vnto vs a Chapter of the new Testament, and then wée altogither sang the fiftéen Psalme of Dauid, and that don to breakfast went, and after breakfast: I my self would néeds pay the whole charges therof, and did, notwithstanding the awarde of our Hóstesse and their great instaunce to the contrary.)

And when I would departe: my Hoast and Pierce Plowman would (whether I would or no) bring mée on my way to Doncaster, and did, and there caused mée to haue great intertainment with out a peny charges for one whole day, and then wée tok either leaue of other, and departed each of vs toward his owne.

After which departure, vpon the way as I traueled: I remembred the Prophet Dauid who saith. I was glad when it was said vnto mee, we shall go into the house of the Lord. Which I suppose he neuer ment by a cõmon Inne or hosterie, where neuer the lesse I may safely say I found it. And therfore ful true it is ỹ Ouid saith, there is oftentimes a good fish in a water where a man would little think. Wée boast much of ciuilitie & nurture in the South partes of this land, namely in London, and dispraise and dispise the North as rude and vnciuil, but surely for mine owne parte (that am a Southern man and borne in Kent) to speak indifferently for any thing that euer I haue found in all my trauel in bothe the partes: I cannot sée nor knowe why the Northern People should

should not rather pitie vs then enuie vs concerning either Godlynes, Vertue or good manners, for heer I haue spoken of the baselt kinde of people wherby it may partly appeare what hope there is of the Gentlemen, Merchaunts and them of the good Townes and Citties, for whose sakes and generally for all others I vndertook to gather and to reporte this little Conference, and with Gods good help and fauor haue don it as nær accordant to the trueth as I could, neither adding therto nor taking therefrom, the desire wherof causes mée to take the lesser Journeyes homeward and to write it by parcels at my Innes lest I might haue forgotten it.

And hérin I protest, that I haue neither flattered nor belyed any man, for my meaning is trueth and the commendation therof, and therin is no flattery, for surely if I haue flattered any body: it is myne owne self in ý that where before I was perswaded that pride had vtterly corrupted this whole common welth and had clean ouer spred it with his generation of all vngodlynes & wickednes wherof all times and ages do agrée him to be the father: sithince this Journey I begin to hope ý God wil haue mercy vpon vs, and hath, & that hée hath reserued vnto him self a remnaunt as hée did in the time of Elias, for whose sakes hée wil spare the rest as hée offered vnto Abraham touching Sodome and Gomorra.

Therfore the intent of this my collection thus appearing: I referre my self to the Judgment of thē to whose hands it shall hérafter come, desiring their good word in recompence therof, and also of my long and weary Journey wherof this labor was myne only reward.

Beséeching Almightie God of his great mercy and clemency to graunt vnto the same no worse effect then I haue ment therin, and that by the Appostles counsel, wée may consider that wée are but Straungers and Pilgrimes hér in Earth, and that there after wée may order our liues & conuersation longing for our owne Cuntrie, content to suffer, and to forbeare and glad to heare or sée the thing that may be for our edifying, learning and knowledge to bée the méeter and bet-

ter welcome into our Cuntrie which is the heauenly Ierusalem whither God for Christes sake bring vs all. Amen.

(‡)

FINIS.

Laus Deo.

☞ *Fælix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*

Who wil arise with mee against the wicked, or who wil take my part against the euil Doers.

THE APOLOGIE
and Conclusion of the Author.

THus ended is this short Collection,
Rude & vnperfect for his want of skil:
Who should haue giuen it perfection,
And would, if his might had been to his (will
Or els if time had therunto suffised:
To haue perused it and recognised.

But for asmuch as I did fayle of bothe,
To wit, of learning and allo of time:
And to let dye such matter I was lothe,
Though I ne could it duely enlumine.
Yet for my God and for my Countries sake:
We thought of force I must it vndertake.

And namely for the Worthy Shire of *Kent*,
Famous of olde time for humanitie:
As is to find in writing auncient,
Besides what dayly proof dooth testifye.
Sith I was borne in her me thought of righe
I ought to bring this matter into light.

So strongly ruleth loue the hart of man,
Namely that loue Which is so naturall:
To doo his Countrie good in What he can,
That his good hart is to be borne withall.
For God requireth of a man but Will:
Although he want wherwith it to fulfill.

THE Thele

¶ These are the cauſes why I took on mee,
To be repoꝛter of this Conference:
Which I haue doon as heere is plaine to ſee
As neere as I could followe their ſentence.
Wherin if I haue fayled any whit:
I pꝛay you in good part to taken it.

¶ Foꝛ firſt touching the matter in ſubſtaunce,
The ſpeakers are the Authoꝛs and not I:
As foꝛ the oꝛder in deliueraunce/
I put it in the Readers courteſie.
To mend it, oꝛ to take it as it is:
Foꝛ he is Wiſe that dooth nothing amiſſe.

FINIS.

Aut bibe, aut abi.